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THE GREEK ADVENTURER:

—OR,—

THE SOLDIER AND THE SPY.

A Tale of the Siege of Sebastopol.

BY LIEUTENANT MURRAY.

CHAPTER I.

THE BATTLE OF INKERMANN.

"Blew the wind wildly and drearily,
Paced the lone sentinel wearily,
Flickered the bivouac's ember,
When, o'er the warriors slumbering,
Threatened by fiercer outnumbering,
Opened the 'fifth of November.'"

It was early morning of November fifth in the Crimea. Sebastopol, the stronghold of Russian power, lay crouching by her harbor in sullen majesty. The long rows of white edifices, and the lofty spires of churches, the noble streets and massive quays, appeared plainly in the gradually increasing morning light, and tantalized the besieger. For there—unharmed by the awful tempest which the artillery of France and England had hurled upon it; uninjured by fire and ball; with beauty undiminished, and strength unshaken; surrounded by Titanic fortifications, and armed with appalling strength—there lay the famous city, and still defied, and laughed to scorn, the might of her beleaguerers.

It was early morning, and few sounds arose to break the stillness of the scene. The weary army without the city lay reposing in peaceful slumber. Careless now of the object of their efforts, they lay beneath the shelter of the countless tents which dotted the surrounding plains, and in dreams re-visited their native land. The sentinels and the outposts wandered listlessly along their beat, and at times glanced carelessly around, as some sudden noise broke rudely in upon the silence of the scene. They wandered half sleepily, for no one thought or dreamed of an attack.

Where the ruins of the ancient town of Inkermann point out a home of some ancient people, is a dark and dismal gorge, whence steep rocks and wooded declivities arise. Upon the western side of this gorge, or valley, the English division was encamped. A thousand tents stood upon the plain, and sheltered the soldiers, who now lay slumbering beneath. They slept, and rocked not of coming danger. They slept soundly, for they were wearied with watching and working, and now enjoyed the peaceful slumber which so kindly visited them. They slept—and why should they not? It might be the last sleep which many might obtain on earth; then let them sleep, and be awakened, and rise to meet the fire, and flame, and death, and be hurled into that world where they will "sleep the sleep that knows no waking."

It was a damp and misty morning, and the sun had not yet risen upon the earth, and the scene around could only be viewed in the dim twilight of the morning. Upon a small knoll at the eastward extremity of the British camp, stood two men, whose anxious gestures and mysterious actions showed them to be intently viewing something of the utmost importance. One of them was dressed in the uniform of a British officer, and had carelessly wrapped around him a heavy military cloak, whose folds, however, did not conceal the dress beneath. The other was dressed in the coarser garb of a private soldier, and seemed to be a servant, or rather a valet, to the officer. Both were intently gazing at some obscure object which was but dimly discernible upon the other side of the valley. The clouds of mist, the obscurity of the dawn, the intervening brushwood and copses, the rocks and stumps, all formed obstacles which prevented a clear survey of any object or movement upon the other side of the valley of Inkermann. So that it was long before the two watchers were satisfied about the existence of some suspicious object, which a short time before had attracted their attention. The officer exhibited the strongest feelings of excited attention, and with every sense raised to the highest point of watchfulness, he stood examining the suspected place.

"No use, Captain D'Arcey, your honor," suddenly said the valet in English, which had a foreign accent. "No use; you can't hear or see anything. There is no sortie."

"Who asked your opinion? Hold your tongue, and listen!" sternly rejoined the officer.

For a few moments longer they watched in silence. A faint light appeared upon the distant slope, and a low, dull sound was heard.

"By heavens! there's something going on—wait!" cried D'Arcey.

"It's only a prowling band of those sons of Gehenna—the Turks!" cried the valet.

"You miserable Greek! Listen!"

A loud noise interrupted him. The falling of some heavy metallic mass, like a large cannon, sent up a harsh, discordant sound; the enormous mass rattled along some disjointed stones, and slid along with a loud ringing and crashing. Suddenly from behind a dark cluster of trees and rocks, a large body of men came moving forward swiftly and noiselessly, and advanced toward a slope which ascended to a commanding eminence. Mechanically and tremblingly, D'Arcey glanced upward, for a sound came from the summit, and thrilled through him. The crest of the hill seemed to be alive with men!

"A surprise, by heavens!" cried D'Arcey, as his eyes glanced upon the scene. "Ho, to arms! The Russians!" he shouted; and drawing his pistols from his belt, he fired them, one after the other, into the air.

Instantly the sentinels, and pickets, and outposts, rear at hand, heard the cry, and the report of the pistols. At once it was caught up, and volley after volley repeated the alarm. It was sent from outpost to outpost, all along the line, and the clamor of the soldiers burst forth as they rose to the alarm. The cry was caught up by the sentinel at the most distant point; it was sent along the line from one to the other; it was answered by the shout of those at the farthest western position, and thus carried along, repeated, and rendered terrible by the accompaniment of a hundred guns; it was sent thrilling into the hearts of the thousands who just waked from slumber.

Then was heard a sullen roar—a deep and indescribable sound, like no other sound which is heard on earth, except, perhaps, the moan of a swiftly rushing torrent. It came up from the whole plain, and increased every moment. It was the sound of the British army, as they rose and prepared suddenly for battle, while the noise of trumpets and alarm guns sounded all around.

It took not long to prepare for battle. Soon the whole army was out, girded for the fight, eager for the strife, terrible in its magnificent array, yet small in numbers, when compared to the overwhelming host which opposed them. For already the vast waves of the coming torrent might be seen. Already the mighty host could be viewed, as they filed along through the valley, towards the height, amid the sound of drums, and trumpets, and music, which now was no longer kept silent.

Now the British comprehended the full terrors of their position. This point of Inkermann was the weakest in the whole army. It had been lying in its present weak and inefficient condition for many weeks. The evil had been pointed out many times to Lord Raglan; but that accomplished general did not take any measures to prevent the danger of a defeat in a sudden sortie, by strengthening the position. On the contrary, he allowed it to remain as it was, and be exposed to every attack, and in danger of being taken.

And now seventy thousand men were marching against this one point! A large number of heavy siege guns had been conveyed during the dark and silent night to a commanding eminence, and threatened the British army. And already the thunder of these enormous guns, and repeated volleys of musketry, which ushered in the dawning of the day, announced that the bloody strife had begun.

Captain D'Arcey, among the brave soldiers of the 31st regiment, stood in one of the most exposed situations, where the Russian guns already began to make most deadly havoc. Yet they responded calmly and unflinchingly; and although the innumerable balls and hail-storm of destroying shot made dreadful carnage in the ranks, yet they stood up manfully, and with their Minie rifles, answered the fire of the enemy, and thinned his ranks with no less power.

Suddenly upon the British, who had formed into position at the point of attack, all the Russian guns opened a more deadly—a more withering fire. Shells and balls, chain-shot and grape-shot, cannister and furious rockets, all were poured in one awful tempest of destruction upon their heads. The crest of the hill was all in a blaze. Fire flashed forth in uninterrupted streams, as lava, and flame, and smoke rushes upward from a volcano in eruption. The dark rolling clouds of voluminous smoke rested upon the crest of the hill, and hid from view the enemy posted there. From behind this thick black cloud, the flashes incessantly burst forth, and guided the course of countless missiles toward the British army.

The English soldiers—they stood their ground firmly and unflinchingly. They answered the roar of the Russian artillery with the thunder of their own; and when the tempest of balls descended in a deadly shower, sweeping them down by scores, there arose another eruption of deadly missiles, and a return fire came back responsively, with the same deadly fury and withering power.

Soon the roar that arose from the field of battle, where the carnage and slaughter raged so terrifically, shook the heavens and rose up to the skies. It spread far over the country, and was echoed deafeningly among the rocky cliffs and crags of Inkermann; it roared along the narrow gorge at the upper extremity of the valley; it spread its mighty reverberations far away on the northern side of the harbor of Sebastopol, from whose fortifications thousands of anxious eyes were straining to see the progress of the terrific struggle!

What availed numbers here? What availed the apparently inevitable conclusions which the contrivers of the onset decided beforehand would follow the strife? Nothing, and worse than nothing! The unlooked for heroism of the British troops—the glorious, persevering obstinacy, and unyielding, unwavering bravery of the Anglo Saxon race here found its proudest triumph. The overpowering waves of Russia rolled in upon the British host. They rolled in with roaring, and thunder, and fury in their onset; but they dashed in vain against the motionless ranks of Albion, and finally, after committing fearful carnage and slaughter, rolled back baffled and defeated!

Where the Guards held an earth-work battery, made of gabions filled with sand-bags, there the contest was hottest—and there the slaughter was most terrific. Three times enormous numbers of the enemy came furiously to the attack, and struggled, and fought, and raged against the frail battery. Three times its heroic defenders were driven off by the immense preponderance of the hostile numbers; and three times did they return to the attack, and at the point of the bayonet expel the intruders, and again remain masters of their position.

Here, at the second return of the Guards to expel the Russians, D'Arcey was stationed with his regiment. There was no rest to the defenders of this position. The Russian guns thundered against it; the Russian armies poured to the assault upon it. Incessantly, untiringly, unshrinkingly, the British guardsmen and the regiment of D'Arcey struggled against the enemy!

Upon that bloody day were witnessed some of the most heroic deeds that ever has glorified man in the eyes of his species. On that day of blood and carnage were performed deeds of grandeur and glory, which showed that the men of modern days could rival the lofty spirits of antiquity in their most illustrious actions!

Then Sir De Lacy Evans, sick and feeble, heard the noise of the battle, and left his couch for the field; yet would not take from his subordinate the honor of command, and generously stood to counsel him. Then the Light Brigade—the noblest branch of British cavalry—rushed on to death and glory, because they knew not how to disobey; and left their glorious name to their country and to immortality.

The strife could not endure thus forever; nor could the small band of British endure forever the awful shock of attack. Amidst the roar and din of battle arose a glad shout, which proclaimed that assistance was at hand. The tricolor waved in the air—the French had come to help them. Then the Russians yielded. Then the Guards and the 31st rushed forth upon them to charge. The strife grew fiercer as the Muscovite retreated.

"On, on! Down with the Russian! On 31st to victory!" shouted D'Arcey. "On, my men, on!" he said, as he pressed forward at the head of his company, mingling in the fight with a party of gallant Zouaves who came up to the aid of the English. At that moment D'Arcey saw one of the French privates, a gallant and active Zouave, contending singly with a little group of Russians; already had the gallant fellow laid two of his adversaries low in death, and though his left arm hung useless by his side, thrust through by a Muscovite bayonet, yet he dealt stout and fatal blows with his right. But the contest was too unequal, and just as the Zouave had sunk upon one knee, and the two Russian soldiers now left were preparing for a last and fatal lunge at him, D'Arcey interposed his own person, and receiving a slight flesh wound, thrust his sword through the body of one herculean enemy, and drawing a pistol from his belt, lodged a ball in the body of the other, as he turned and fled towards the retreating ranks of the Russians.

"Rise, my good fellow," said D'Arcey, as he lent a hand to the panting Zouave. "Rise. I hope you are not much hurt—are you?"

"Nothing serious, monsieur; though I owe you my life," continued the grateful soldier. "You are yourself wounded."

"Slightly, slightly," replied the young Englishman, as he turned once more to cheer on his men.

"We shall know each other, if we meet again," said the Zouave, inquiringly, at the same moment extending his hand; and the two exchanged glances of intelligence as they gave to each other the *sign of the mystic tie!*

D'Arcey stooped down, and binding his scarf around the bleeding arm of the soldier, whispered a word of cheering import, and then again turning, hastened towards his own men, who by this time had advanced some distance upon the flanks of the retreating enemy.

"On, on!" shouted D'Arcey, as he came up with his men. "On, boys, and teach them to remain within their walls."

"Hurra! hurra!" shouted the excited soldiers.

On they rushed, now overtaking a score of the enemy, whom they overcame, and then rushing forward again—D'Arcey still at their head, and by his example and voice encouraging them to deeds of valor. But stay! he staggers—sinks to one knee, with his left hand pressed to his temple; his men gather round him as his face grows paler and paler, and the blood struggles through his fingers.

"On, my braves!—on, I say!" shouted the wounded officer, sternly, still pointing with his sword towards the retreating enemy.

They hesitated; love for their captain, the dictates of humanity, real personal regards—all struggling in their brave bosoms. He saw them pause, and with a superhuman effort struggled to his feet.

"On, I say! Will ye obey me?"

They met the stern glance of his eye and obeyed, rushing after the foe once more. But the young English officer staggered slowly, and fell senseless to the ground!

CHAPTER II.

THE GIPSEY CAMP.

Turning from the scene of deadly strife, where nations meet in arms, let us now pay a visit to that land which had sent forth so many of her best and bravest to the East, to do battle in her name.

Night had long since settled dark and deep over a forest tract of "Merrie England." It was late in autumn; but though the evenings were chilly, the frosts had not yet set in, so that the foliage was as yet unchanged, and formed a screen as deep and impenetrable as in the leafy month of June. The evaporation from the chill, moist earth had gathered in a heavy drapery of mist that hung low upon the treetops, and veiled the army of stars that wheeled unseen in their appointed courses.

In the very heart of the wooded region we have glanced at, in an open glade, through which the purling of a crystal brook made merry music night and day, were pitched the low, patched and weather-beaten tents of a gipsey tribe, embracing a large number of men, women and children. These bronzed rovers of the wildwood had been recruited from different sources—many of them coming from various parts of the continent of Europe. Yet they assimilated together well enough, for the same customs and laws, with certain modifications, govern the whole race.

The whole community was ruled by an aged woman, who was born abroad, and had traversed many countries, and who was supposed to have gathered in the course of long years an amount of information which rendered her judgment infallible. Even the vagabonds and impostors by whom Ella, the Bohemian, was surrounded, implicitly believed that she possessed the power of reading future events—for those who deceive others, are ever readiest to deceive themselves. Even the patrico, or hedge priest—a degraded being, who had once been in holy orders, but whom the church had expelled for intemperance; a man who had not yet forgotten his classical lore, even in his lucid intervals gave full credit to the oracular powers of the gipsey Pythoness. The latter was now seated on a sort of throne of turf, upon which a bundle of sheepskins had been cast, before a blazing fire, over which hung from a stout sapling, suspended in the crotches of two upright stakes, a huge kettle, the contents of which, now in a furious state of ebullition, emitted a savory steam most delectable to the nostrils of those who were a hungered. The old gipsey was dressed with a good deal of pretension. She wore a red staff petticoat, beneath which appeared shoes with tarnished silver buckles. Over her shoulders was thrown a black silk velvet mantle, once the property of a lady of rank—a gift to the gipsey queen from a waiting-maid, to whom she had predicted an extraordinary fortune. A turban was wound around her head in artistic folds, and huge gold ear rings were looped, not into her ears, but into the bands of silver-gray hair that descended from beneath the turban on either side of the face. On her tawny, skinny hands she wore rings of price, and her staff, which lay beside her, wrought all over with cabalistic characters, had a golden head. Her face was bronzed, weather beaten and deeply lined; but the features were well cut, though bold, and age had not dimmed the intense brilliancy of her black eyes, that had the piercing glance of the falcon.

Seated on a step of turf, a foot lower than the queen, was another female figure of peculiar attractiveness. A light form, slender and rounded, and giving promise of a gazelle-like activity, features that resembled the queen, but were infinitely more feminine, and cast in the most perfect mould of beauty, diamond eyes, that glistened in the firelight, waving black hair, flowing in natural curls, and bringing into relief the pearl and gold ornaments that here and there appeared among its raven masses, a boddice of scarlet velvet, wrought with gold, a gilded girdle, that sustained a pearl handled poignard, an ash colored skirt of fine broadcloth, embroidered at the bottom with a wreath of vines in dark brown silk; with these hints of feature and costume, we shall be able to form a faint idea of the attractive presence of Zerlina, the daughter of the gipsey queen. Let us complete the picture, by adding that, at the feet of the gipsey girl lay a large wolf-hound, basking in the warmth of the fire, and one of her slender hands reposed caressingly upon his shaggy head.

The other figures huddled round the fire, some squatting, some lying on their faces, with their slouched hats pushed back from their foreheads, others lolling at length, supported on their elbows, scarcely merit a description. They were commonplace characters, while the queen and her companion would have enchained the attention of an artist, or a poet. They all appeared to be awaiting, with ravenous impatience, the completion of the culinary preparations, which, from their importance, had been confided to the patrico, or hedge priest, a rusty fellow in seedy black, with a Bardolph nose, and a most villanously animal expression of countenance. This worthy personage solemnized the marriages, and cooked the victuals of the tribe—when he was sober. He was now hovering over the fire, armed with a large fork and a huge spoon. The heat appeared to have no more effect upon him than on a salamander. Ever and anon, as if purely to tantalize the lookers on, he would dexterously dive his fork into some floating object, and holding it up to view, expatiate a moment on its merits ere he let it slip back again into the bubbling liquid from which he had raised it. He varied this amusement by tasting the savory viands repeatedly, under pretence of ascertaining the state of the preparation. This operation was peculiarly distasteful to the gipseys, who murmured that he was thus surreptitiously securing the lion's share of the feast to himself.

"Ah, my lads," said he, raising a huge slice of ham on his fork, "thank your stars you're good Christians, and not Jews. This was from a Hampshire porker—the trophy of my own valor. One smothered squeal and he was mute; the next moment he was riding unconsciously hither on the back of a donkey, and the yokel that raised him will tear his hair for lack of bacon at the coming Christmas. *Sic vos non vobis mellificatis apes*, as the Latin poet hath it. But I forget that I'm casting pearls before swine. You have no ears for the classics, and you know nothing of the 'feast of reason, and the flow of soul.' And look at this lovely turkey, ye ignorant varlets! A prouder never strutted his hour on the lawn of Hampton manor. But he roosted too remote from the farm-house. The night was moonless, and the watch dog mute, when he was the prize of the foragers. Ah, and here's a plump and tender chicken—fated fitting for the dainty pearls of the *kinchin morte* (young girls) of the tribe. This chickabiddy's from the manor of the D'Arceys."

"Who breathes the name of the D'Arceys of Beacon Hall!" said the queen, for the first time paying attention to the "bald, disjointed chat" of the patrico.

"I did, mother," said the patrico, with a show of respect—for he really respected nothing and no one.

"My curses be upon them!" said the queen, with vehemence.

"Amen!" answered the patrico. "Anathema maranatha!—be they thrice accursed."

"You say well!" said the queen. "They are our deadliest enemies. What harm was a little wood from the forest?—a little game from the preserves of that wealthy baronet? Has he not broad lands and full coffers, teeming acres and a fat kitchen? Yet he drove us from his vacant lands; he threatened us with the stocks and the jail; he set his dogs upon us, and the hounds of the law, and compelled us to betake ourselves to this wild retreat. Had ye the spirit of your brethren of other lands and times, bitterly would the D'Arceys rue the hour when they crossed your path. Had ye the strength to do, as well as the thought to will, there would be a brighter light upon the hearthstone of the D'Arceys, than was ever kindled there at merry Christmas time. The red flames should leap rejoicing from hearthstone to hanging—from floor to ceiling—from ceiling to roof. Yes, yes," muttered the crone, half to herself, "there's fuel for a merry bonfire. The village bells would ring too late—for I would cut the ropes beforehand—and Beacon Hall should be a heap of ashes ere the moon had waned."

"Hush, mother!" said Zerlina, laying her hand on the arm of the infuriated woman.

"Ay, you give your mother good advice," said the patrico. "You live in the past, and forget how times are changed. A bonfire is merry while it lasts; but the County Assizes and county jail soon take the fine edge off fun like that. No, no, we have a secret, sure revenge as it is—the luxury of wishing them bad luck, and the skill to rob them undetected. Faith, I haven't lost the flavor of the last red deer that we shot in the outskirts of the park! And in this very pot are now simmering a couple of pullets from Beacon Hall courtyard, and two brace of partridges from the Beacon Hall preserves!"

"I snared them myself," said a young gipsey.

"And you did nobly, my son," said the patrico. "You are probably aware that among the ancient Spartans, theft was respectable only when undetected. But I forget; you never studied the humanities, and only obeyed the impulses of your own good heart. And mother, we have additional consolations as regards these D'Arceys; your ill wishes stick to them, and work them evil."

"Do they?" asked the crone.

"Ay, do they!" replied the patrico, triumphantly. "There's young Lionel D'Arcey gone to the wars, and next to sure of being killed. The baronet, smitten with a strange malady, languishes day by day. There is sorrow in the household—and there may be death."

"'Tis well," said the queen. "And now hasten supper; my people are famished. You prate too much."

At this moment the large wolf-hound that lay at the feet of Zerlina suddenly raised his head, and gave a low growl. The girl started, but a flattering caress soon quieted the animal.

"What ails Wolf?" asked the queen.

"Nothing, mother; nothing," answered Zerlina, hurriedly. "He has been restless all the evening. I believe," she added, rising, "that like myself, he needs exercise. We will walk in the forest."

"So late," said the queen.

"All hours are alike to me," said the child of the forest. "I could tread these wood paths blindfold."

"But supper is ready, my child."

"No matter. I have no appetite—and I shall return with one. Come, Wolf!"

The dog, thus addressed, sprang to his feet; and after laying his nose to the ground a moment and snuffing, bounded off at full speed. The gipsey girl followed him with a light and elastic step, turning back to smile, and wave an adieu to her mother.

"Bless thee, child of my heart!—light of my eyes!" said the aged woman. "Evil was the day that brought a cloud on thy bright spirit. Yet lately I have seen her thoughtful, if not sad. Something presses on her mind. Be it mine to discover and remove the cause. Hark, thee, Mark!"

She beckoned a gipsey youth, who lay upon the sward near her, apparently indifferent to all that was said and done around him.

"You noted the path Zerlina took?" she said.

"Ay, mother."

"Follow her, but do not let her know that she is watched. Observe whither she goes, and what she does. Report to me in private, and betray not my confidence or hers—I charge thee by the sacred sign of the Mystery!"

The young gipsey bowed reverently, and laid his finger on his lip.

Leaving the gipseys to the enjoyment of the smoking supper, which the patrico now began to serve out to them in wooden bowls, let us follow Zerlina, the darling of the tribe.

CHAPTER III.

THE LOVER FOILED.

WELL had Zerlina said that she could find her way through the forest blindfold. Aided only by the gleams from the camp fire, that each moment grew more dim, she pursued her way swiftly and unerringly, where even a woodman might have been at fault. The dog kept close beside her, uttering at times a low growl, as if both conscious of danger and determined to protect his mistress.

In this manner the girl and her dumb guardian had proceeded for perhaps about half a mile, when Wolf sprang forward with a savage growl, and disappeared in the darkness in advance. A moment afterwards a voice, well known to the gipsey, exclaimed:

"Zerlina, for the love of heaven, speak to the savage brute! He will rend me in pieces!"

With a wild cry, Zerlina rushed forward, calling to the dog in those tones he never ventured to disobey. The next moment a sudden and bright light flashed on the darkness of the forest, as a lantern held in the hand of a stranger threw its radiance in a broad circle round him. He set down the light as the dog slunk growling away, and Zerlina, with an exclamation of joy, sprang forward and folded the stranger in her warm embrace.

"My beautiful!—my own!" she exclaimed. "Have you come at last? Wearily, wearily have the hours passed since your last visit. A thousand fears beset my heart—and yours!—how it beats!"

"It is with joy," said the stranger; for he scorned to acknowledge the mortal fear with which the attack of the savage dog had inspired him. "Wolf must learn to know his friends," said he, gently extricating himself from the arms of the gipsey girl. "Here, Wolf! good fellow! Come here, sir."

But the dog only growled savagely, and showed his white teeth as he turned away from the proffered caress.

"Sit down, Walter; sit down!" said Zerlina, leading him to the bank. "You must be weary; you have walked many miles to see me, as you did the last time."

"No, dearest," said the young man. "Yonder stands the fleet and faithful steed that brought me hither." And he pointed, as he spoke, to a noble black horse that stood hard by tied to the limb of an old oak tree.

"O, the pretty creature!" said Zerlina, springing up. "I shall love him for your sake." And she ran to him, and patted his glossy neck, while the docile creature stooped his head as if pleased with the flattering caress.

"Come sit down beside me," said the young man, "or I shall be jealous of Selim."

"O, you exacting creature!" said the girl; and she resumed her place beside the stranger.

He was tall, handsome and finely formed, with dark hair and dark eyes; but yet the expression of his face was far from pleasing. He had a downcast and irresolute look, which an astute physiognomist would have interpreted as indicative of both treachery and cowardice; and his smile—though the mouth was finely cut, and the teeth it disclosed pearly and even—was as chilling as a pale moonbeam flickering on a field of ice. But Zerlina, girlish and confiding, saw nothing sinister in the eyes or the smile that shone upon her lovely face. Perhaps the imperfect light prevented her assigning the full value of the expression. She gazed fondly up into the stranger's countenance, and leaning on him, took his right hand in both of hers.

"You have been long away," she said.

"It was my misfortune—not my fault," was the reply, couched in low and musical tones.

"Walter," said the girl, looking down after a moment, "you have not deceived me?"

"In what way?" asked the young man, starting.

"You told me you were in humble life, and labored for your support."

"I did so; and I repeat it."

"Yet this hand I hold in mine betrays you. It is as small and soft as mine—and whiter."

The young man hastily withdrew it.

"My vocation is not a very toilsome one," said he. "Not one, at least," he added, "to make any severe call on my frame."

"Are you sure you are not a gentleman?" asked the gipsey girl. "Remember that I have told fortunes ever since I was a very little girl, and I am quite skilled in the science of palmistry. Judging by this hand, I should say you did nothing."

"And what if I were a gentleman, and did nothing?" asked Walter.

"Then it would break my heart—that's all," said the gipsey girl, sadly.

"And why so, you charming, enigmatical creature?"

"Because then you could never be mine. Who of the proud ones of the earth ever truly loved a gipsey girl—an outcast—a Pariah?"

"Then quiet your little, fluttering heart," said the young man, gently. "I am not a gentleman born—and I am in humble life. You have not judged me rightly. If you would know all, listen to me. Walter Freelove is gamekeeper to my Lord of Lincoln."

"Only a gamekeeper!" said the gipsey girl, laughing, and clapping her hands. "How you have relieved me! But," she added, after a thoughtful pause, "a gamekeeper is a sworn enemy of our race. A gamekeeper is bound to shoot a poacher; and we gipseys, you know, are all poachers."

"For your sake, dearest," said Walter Freelove, "your brethren, so far as I am concerned, shall be as free of Lincoln Chase, as if they were my lord himself."

"And you are sure you are only a gamekeeper?"

"As sure as that I love you."

"And are you sure of that?" asked the gipsey girl, with sparkling eyes, but in a manner that showed she entertained not the slightest doubt of the assertion.

"Listen to me," said Walter. "Do you remember the first time you ever saw me?"

"To be sure I do," answered Zerlina. "It was at the Fair, when I was alone and telling fortunes."

"Yes, I came to you to tell mine."

"I faltered, for my science failed me. I only knew that it was my fortune to love you."

"And my blessing to enjoy your love," said Walter. "Love with us was love at first sight. Though I scarcely dared to hope, I begged permission to see you."

"And I granted it; for the gipsey girl has none of the scruples of the children of the world—with its artificial restraints and injurious fears. The Zingara knows how to protect herself, and to despise the cavils of the world she hates."

"Each time I have seen you," pursued Walter, "my passion has become more deepened—has become more intensified—more pure—until now life is nothing to me without you."

"Say you so, Walter? O, these words are blessed music; they echo my own thoughts. Do you know, Walter, that since I have known you, all my old simple pleasures have become distasteful? Do you know that the brook has no music for my ear, except as it reminds me of your voice? Do you know that when the birds awake me with their matin carol, I no longer hang entranced upon their wild, free notes? O, how I have wished that you were a bird, and I your mate, that we might fly away together—away, away over valleys and rivers to some green, lovely retreat, where we could pass our lives without one wish for other companionship!"

"Dear Zerlina! and I have wished for wealth, that I might share it with you—for a palace, that I might fitly lodge my beautiful bride!"

"Talk not to me of palaces," said the gipsey. "I have seen them in Venice, in Vienna, in Madrid—for I have roamed all over Europe. Believe me, they hide weary hearts and aching heads. No, no; the only happiness is to be found beneath the gipsey tent and the greenwood tree."

"Then the humble lodge to which alone I can take you will content your hopes, Zerlina."

The gipsey girl was silent for a moment, and then she said:

"You must not talk to a gipsey of dwelling within builded walls, and beneath a builded roof. Her heart would break, like a wild bird's, in confinement. No gipsey can leave her tribe. My mates are true to me, and I must be true to them. My mother alone has power to annul the laws of the tribe, and that she will hardly care to do. If you love me, as you say you do—if your sphere in life is humble, as you say it is—you will join us. I will ensure your welcome as a brother. The world will then be our tramping ground. Think of the priceless pleasures of that wild life. When one region of earth becomes inhospitable, we forsake it for another. When the forest leaves turn yellow, and the birds forsake the withering branches, we follow them in their flight. We are children of the summer; we cross seas and rivers. Wherever there are green leaves, and wild flowers, and bright streams, there is our home."

"Wherever the caprice of the tribe wills it to be," said Walter.

"Wherever the queen of the tribe wills it—and my mother is the queen," said Zerlina, proudly. "When she is laid in the grave—and far distant be the date—I, in my turn, shall be the queen (and a rich one—for my mother has store of hidden gold and gems), and my husband, king."

"King of the gipsies!" said Walter, scornfully.

"You have betrayed yourself!" exclaimed Zerlina. "In that scornful laugh rang out the cry of wounded pride. You are not humbly born, or lowly bred."

"No! Thank God, I am a gentleman!" said Walter. "And let me add, as proud as Lucifer, son of the morning. I have deceived you, but only in one thing—in my rank. I am of gentle blood, but still I love you. I love you, Zerlina for you are worthy of a throne."

"And heiress to one," replied the gipsey. "And I would not exchange that throne, Walter Freelove, for the realm Victoria rules. Gipsey was I born, and gipsey will I die!"

"But you will not sacrifice your heart to this frantic devotion to your tribe?"

"No, no, Walter; I shall never cease to love you."

"Then you will be mine."

Zerlina was a long time silent, the prey to deep emotion, and then she answered:

"Yes, for you I would give up all freedom—the bright air of heaven—the unfettered life I lead—all, if my mother will but consent—if she will induce the tribe to consent to it! I will tame my wild heart, and its wild yearnings for you. Go with me this very night. I will kneel with you at my mother's feet; I will tell her that her answer is life and death to me—and I will vouch for her consent. Come, come with me, Walter."

"Nay, nay," said Walter. "I will never stoop to plead before such a tribunal! Fly with me this night—this moment. My horse will be too proud of such a fair burthen. Come!" And, rising, Walter placed his arm around her waist, and drew her towards his horse.

"Unhand me, Walter, I implore you!" cried the struggling girl. "Unhand me! I command you, sir!"

But Walter, whispering words of love and persuasion in her ear, continued to draw her along. The heart of the gipsey was taking arms against her—she was almost ready to fly with her lover, and on the very eve of giving her consent, when, simultaneously with the savage spring of the faithful Wolf, the stern voice of a man rang out on the night air:

"Unhand her, villain!"

And the gipsey Mark, rushing out of the underwood, caught up the lantern, and held it on high, so that its light fell full on the features of Walter Freelove.

"Not at your bidding, dog of a gipsey!" was the fierce reply, as Walter lifted the fainting Zerlina from the ground.

"Then look out for fearful odds!" said the gipsey. "My signal will bring the whole tribe down on you."

And dropping the lantern, he drew a pair of pistols from his belt. Two dazzling flashes and one deep detonation followed. In less than five minutes a band of men, with waving torches, rushed into the clearing. Zerlina lay in a swoon upon the greensward—but horse and rider were both gone. To the inquiries of the gipsies, Mark replied:

"A scoundrel attempted to carry off our queen's daughter. It is useless to pursue him—he is mounted. But I should know him again among a thousand. Let us lift Zerlina—tenderly, gently—and take her to our queen."

In the course of our narrative, we shall again find traces of the mysterious fugitive.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WARNING VOICE.

IN one of the most fertile counties of the south of England stood Beacon Hall, the ancestral home of the D'Arcey family. Its noble walls and turrets gray with age, and in many places covered with a thick growth of ivy, rose on high from amidst a dense grove of venerable trees. Mighty oaks, the home of countless rooks, surrounded the ancient manor-house, and lofty elms spread their branches around. Far away on every side the lands of the family spread, and beautiful rivulets, and sequestered lakes, embosomed among umbrageous groves, added their charms to the beautiful landscape. Deer roamed at liberty through the grounds, now stooping to taste the cool water which bubbled along the pebbly beds of the rivulets, and now startled by some sudden noise, bounding swiftly along the fields towards the shelter of a neighboring grove. Swans floated upon the surface of the quiet lakes, gazing proudly at the reflection of their beautiful forms; glittering fish swam and darted or lazily floated in the crystal waters beneath; birds poured forth a gush of melodious song from the branches of the overhanging trees; all was beauty and life and gladness.

It was night at Beacon Hall. The blue sky had been suddenly covered by a canopy of dense clouds, and the beauties of the surrounding scene had been shut out by the gloom of twilight from the view of the beholder. A low but strong wind moaned sombrely through the branches of the trees, and bird and beast had sought shelter for the night. Few sounds arose to break the repose and stillness of the season, except when the occasional bark of the watch-dog or the voices of servants suddenly sounded through the silent air. Lights gleamed from the windows of the old hall, and shone out in clearly-defined rays through the thick darkness, throwing a startling air of wild beauty upon the immediate vicinity of the place, and giving to some parts of the nearest groves an appearance of beauty and splendor, which it were difficult to describe. The most brilliant stream of light came forth from the window of a small turret chamber at the northern extremity of the hall, and while it flashed brightly through the darkness, the occasional eclipse and the thick shadow, cast at times upon the grove on which the light fell, showed that a human form was pausing and repassing before it. Some one was pacing up and down that small chamber.

Two persons occupied this chamber. One was a young man of fine figure, and face which would have been pronounced handsome, had not a certain downcast air injured the expression. He was richly dressed, in a long gown of soft quilted silk, and lazily reclined upon a sofa at one side of the apartment. His companion was much older, and, from the striking family resemblance between the two, he was evidently the father of the young man. He was plainly dressed, and paced the floor near the window. As he walked up and down he spoke not a word, but, keeping his hands behind him, he gazed abstractedly upon the floor, as though involved in thought. The room was adorned in an antique manner, and its panelled walls decked with faded tapestry, had an air of gloom, which even the brilliant light could scarce expel.

"So you think your measures are well taken?" suddenly said the young man, raising himself from the sofa.

"As well as human ingenuity could devise, or human industry execute," replied the elder, stopping in his walk, and gazing intently upon his companion.

"Why, then, are you so anxious?"

"I am not anxious, Reginald, my boy," said the other, with a slight smile; "I am not anxious but I am, or rather I was, thinking whether there were any further steps to be taken, by which the success of my project could be secured."

"I think you have done all that you could."

"Yes; Lionel D'Arcey is *safe* in the Crimea," said the other, with a bitter sneer. "Perhaps his noble and chivalrous spirit may save him from danger and death. Perhaps his matchless courage may keep him from misery and starvation!"

"Misery and starvation? How?"

"When I so warmly seconded the efforts of Lionel to obtain a commission in the army of the Crimea, I knew well that he was going to a place from which there was little prospect of his returning. Yes, my boy; I foresaw mismanagement, suffering, horror, beyond all that you can imagine, in this expedition. Lionel departed upon it. Lionel will never return."

"Yet you may be mistaken. They have not yet suffered."

"Do you not know that a Russian winter is coming on, and that the army is utterly unprepared? They are rushing forward to ruin from their own mismanagement. Lionel will never return!"

"Yet there are chances. Have you relied on this alone?"

"Not I. I have taken other measures."

"How?"

"The Greek!"

"The Greek? Philippo?"

"Yes, Philippo. I think that there is little danger of Philippo's conscience interfering with the execution on his part of all the plans with which I have entrusted him. I pay him well; and he who robbed a Greek church, and helped to murder the priests, who has been a Russian spy for six years, *he* will not stop at anything, I imagine."

"Then your hopes of Lionel's death rest upon two foundations?"

"Yes. If war, and starvation, and untold suffering, does not put him out of the way, then the machinations of my trusty Greek will certainly finish him. Philippo's mind is subtle, and his dagger is keen."

"You do not suppose that Philippo would assassinate Lionel, do you?" said the younger, with a half shudder.

"Reginal D'Arcey, you have not got the spirit of a man! Listen," said the father, drawing a chair to the sofa, and sitting down, while a hideous expression of triumph crossed his countenance—"Listen. My Greek is no common murderer. He is an artist. I know my man. He has been long my coadjutor in our dealings with the czar, both formerly and latterly. He will go to work in a scientific manner, and do all that may be required of him in the most artistic manner. Now he will pretend to be the most attached and faithful of valets. He will contrive some way to save Lionel's life, so as to secure his esteem and confidence. He will get presents from his master. But he will concoct some elaborate plan of ruin for Lionel, which shall utterly overwhelm him. I should not wonder, knowing Philippo's character, I should not wonder if he were to have Lionel inveigled into some spying scrape. O, Philippo understands things! He will manage it."

"Is there no fear that Lionel may win the fellow's good will, and that Philippo may prove treacherous?"

"I have no such fear."

"And yet he is treacherous, for he plays that game on Lionel."

"True, but I have made it for his interest to serve me. He has long been an agent of mine. I befriended him, have paid him liberally, and continue to do so, with a promise that if I come into possession of the estate as I desire, he shall share a most princely reward for the part he plays."

"Is the Greek entirely mercenary?"

"I think so; and on that string of his nature have I played, though I have more than once suspected he *has* got a soul."

"Souls and consciences are inconvenient things," replied Reginald; "for my part, I don't see why they were created."

"In possession of our tools decidedly bad, and useless all together."

"Now, if this scheme or any other fails, there is the chance of a bullet in a skirmish, you know," said Reginald.

"Right, my boy; but the snake in the grass will be a character more suited to the Grecian genius of Philippo."

"Lionel then is done for. I think that is pretty certain— Ha! what noise is that?" and Reginald suddenly leaped from the couch.

"What noise? There was no noise. How can there be any. It's your fancy, you coward!" said his father, sternly.

"I'm no coward; I did hear a noise. You know, too, that we cannot be too careful in our conversation, for walls have ears."

"True," said the other. "Let us see that all is right, if it be only for our own satisfaction."

They opened the door and looked out, but saw nothing; they narrowly searched the closets and corners of the room, but as nothing was found, they concluded that it was an imaginary sound, and resumed their conversation.

"Lionel, the son and heir, being gone, then," said Reginald, "all the game is ours."

"Yes, all is ours. My brother is safe in my hands. The cursed fool! Why should he be the elder, and get all these broad lands? He shall not receive the value of them. I will do his son Lionel to death, and he too shall be dead within these walls before three months pass away."

"The concoction is certain?"

"As death."

"Where did you get it?"

"The imperial physician at St. Petersburgh gave me the receipt when I was there last year. It is a preparation which the Empress Catharine was fond of administering to those whom she wished to put out of the way in an easy and unsuspicious manner."

"How fortunate! You owe much to your Russian connection."

"Much. I should have starved, had not the chivalrous Orlanoff found me, fifteen years ago, and engaged me as *gentleman correspondent* to the czar. Ha! ha! Long live the czar!"

"He pays well, any way."

"Especially in war time."

An unmistakable noise suddenly was heard. Both started up.

"What was that?" cried Reginald, startled and terrified.

"By Jove, I don't know."

They looked at one another, and then eagerly searched the room. They took lights, and going out, examined the other rooms. They looked out from the window, determined to be satisfied of the safety of their situation from all listeners.

"It must be the wind; no one is here," said Reginald.

They resumed their seats, and spoke not for some time. At last Reginald exclaimed:

"What of Irene?"

"Irene? Why, when Lionel is finished, she, of course, must revert to you in the natural order of things."

"Yes, she must. Of course she must. But just now she is pretty far from thinking of such a thing."

"Pooh! If she dislikes you now, she will soon get over that. Leave that to me. She must be yours. She is too precious a prize to lose!"

"How did you become her guardian? You never told me," said Reginald.

"Her father became obnoxious to the Greek government, under which he lived, you know, and came to live in England. I became acquainted with the wealthy Nikolai Arbanon in London. I could speak fluently modern Greek, and I was a debater at ancient; so I got into the good graces of the old gentleman at once. He died, and made me guardian of Irene and her property. She will be of age in two years, so that there is plenty of time for us to secure her in the holy bonds. Her property is vast. She has relatives in Odessa, and wants to go there; but she shall not."

"Confound that dog Lionel! He has secured her love, and there is little hope for me."

"Very little while he lives. He must be put out of the way. It is for your interest as well as for mine. As long as he lives she will love him madly. When he is out of the way, however, she will forget him—"

"Never!" suddenly cried a voice.

"Good God!" Up leaped the two from their seats, and, with a kind of superstitious terror, glanced wildly around.

"What infernal spying is going on here?" hoarsely whispered the father of Reginald, as he fiercely pulled open the door, and looked intently all around. They both renewed their search. Every corner, and closet, and cranny, was again found vacant, as they narrowly examined them. Nothing more was seen or heard beyond what they had seen and heard before.

"I do not understand it," said Reginald, huskily.

"I believe it was only some ordinary noise, which our excited fancies transformed into that word, for surely no living being is here. Do you believe in ghosts?"

"No," said Reginald, boldly.

"Then that sound was only imaginary."

"Be it so."

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"Well, you are safe. I will go now, and l
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"Good night," was the reply, and the unnatural plotters separated.

CHAPTER V.

THE MIDNIGHT SEARCH.

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Reginald glanced in bewilderment at a page of closely written cypher, which his father held out to his inspection. It seemed like the writing of our friends from the Celestial Empire, being neither more nor less intelligible.

"Ha! ha! father. You are pretty safe in that."

"Yes, tolerably safe, I imagine. I don't see how this could be read without a key, even if it were intercepted. And here I have a note from Nesselrode."

"Well, you are safe. I will go now, and leave you to your honorable employment. Good-night."

"Good-night," was the reply, and the two unnatural plotters separated.

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"Villain and wretch!" exclaimed the elder lady suddenly, in the Greek language, clasping her hands together in horror. "O, my husband! how were you deceived when you took to your bosom this viper—this Henry D'Arcey. Great Heaven! can crime so foul exist upon this earth, and exist unpunished? O, Irene, we must fly from this home of villany!"

"Mother—we must fly, and soon, too, if we would escape. But O, for Lionel I tremble."

"Yes, the atrocious scheme which we have heard unfolded is terrible, and may cause the ruin of your Lionel, Irene. It befits us now to consider our situation and act as seems best for our safety."

"O, how fortunate that we were able to find that secret passage which led us to their chamber. We have overheard them. We know their plots, their crimes, their villany. He is poisoning Lionel's father. He would slay the son, and he would take me—me, for the wife of his own monstrous progeny. Great Heaven! can such things be?"

In uncontrollable excitement Irene rose up and paced the floor.

"Irene," said her mother, "do not give way to such feelings at this time. Our position is awful. Think of the hideous secrets which we have discovered."

"I do, I do; and I think, too, of our dreadful situation; foreigners alone in a foreign land—betrayed, and in danger of ruin. We must fly, mother."

"Yes, and at once."

"But first we must let Lionel know of this, and put him on his guard against his treacherous valet, who—O, Heaven!—may before this have wrought his ruin."

"Yes, but to-morrow will be time for that. Be it your duty to-morrow to put Lionel on his guard, and acquaint him with all. But now, Irene, now we must consider how we are to act."

"Have we money, here?"

"Ready money? Yes, I have two hundred pounds in my purse, and my jewels are sufficiently valuable. As to property, most of what your father left lies in Odessa. A large amount is in England. But the villanous Henry D'Arcey, being guardian and executor, has possession of all our papers and documents."

"Alas, what are we to do! We cannot get possession of them. He will not yield them up."

"No, if he thought we were intending to leave, he would only hold on to those papers with more tenacity. He could manage to deprive us of all our property. Irene, we must fly—and we must fly secretly. To do otherwise would be to bring down his suspicion and wrath upon us, and thereby cause our ruin."

"But we cannot go without the papers."

"No, we cannot. We must have them."

"But how?"

There was a short but meaning silence. It seemed as though a desperate thought had entered simultaneously the minds of both. A significant glance passed between them.

"Can it be done?" said Irene, understanding her mother's thought, although no word had been uttered.

"It can—it must. We must summon to our aid, Irene, all the guile and subtilty, which they say are the chief characteristics of the Greek character; we must summon all to our aid, we must get those papers. They are ours, we must take them from his desk—"

"Hush, there may be listeners!"

"Listeners? Ha ha—and who can understand as here?"

"The scoundrel, Henry D'Arcey."

"Pooh! he is writing his Russian correspondence. We must get those papers. We must fly at once."

"And what can we do with our things here?"

"Things—are you mad? A few minutes will suffice for us to make all necessary preparations, and then off for Odessa."

"Richard is trusty, is he not?" asked Irene.

"He is. I will call him now. Wait."

She rose, and stealthily left the room. Irene sat upon the couch and waited in silence. At length she arose and went to a bureau; opening a drawer, she took out a small mahogany case which she unlocked. A small dagger lay within. She put this in the folds of her dress.

"Who knows what may happen? Best to prepare," she muttered, as she walked back to the lounge.

Her mother re-entered in a short time, with the same noiselessness that had marked her departure. She held open the door for a moment, and a man entered. Then closing the door she locked it and resumed her seat.

The new comer was about fifty years of age, and in his sturdy form and broad face was an excellent type of an old household servant. Yet his face had a peculiar expression, or rather want of expression, which would have baffled the most acute physiognomist. His eyes were frank and open, but the rest of his face was perfectly impassive and inexpressive. He might be either an honest man or a rogue, for his face would disagree with neither character. As the ladies sat upon the sofa, the man stood in a respectful attitude, waiting to be addressed. At length Madame Arbanon broke the silence.

"Richard, you have shown yourself our friend. Your warning about your master's dishonesty startled us. You took us to the corridor. We listened and were appalled. You were right in what you said to us. We intend to fly."

Richard bowed his head, and spoke not a word.

"We want to escape quietly. Can you help us?"

"Yes'm," was the laconic reply.

"You know the house well?"

"Every nook and cranny, every winding passage and secret way (and they are not scarce in old Beacon Hall), every one of them I know. I'm an old servant, ma'am. I was born here."

"Since you have been true to us, I will tell you that we want to get into that chamber."

"Yes 'm."

"Can you get us in?"

"Yes 'm," said Richard, unhesitatingly.

"When will your master leave?"

"He always goes to bed at eleven."

"It is nearly that now."

"Then he will soon leave. He is punctual, and drops everything when his bed hour comes."

"And suppose, Richard," and Madame Arbanon spoke insinuatingly, "suppose you know that we wanted to get some papers of ours, that were in—"

"Hard to get," said Richard, dubiously shaking his head, "hard to get."

"But it must be done!"

"Then we can but try. There are some ways, but they are dangerous."

"How can we escape from the hall in peace?"

"There is a railway station ten miles from here, ma'am. It'll be a matter of an hour's drive there, and a train starts at four in the morning. You can be in London by noon to-morrow."

"Richard, you are indeed a friend."

"But you will save master Lionel?" Richard spoke tremulously, and turned away his head. The ladies were astonished at his emotion.

"Save him? He shall know all at once."

The faithful old servant did not speak, but expressed volumes of thanks in his grateful glance. Then they waited patiently. The old clock at length tolled out the hour of eleven. As the last tones died away, Irene stepped forward to the door. For a moment she listened.

"There—he is going."

Far away at the other extremity of the long hall they heard the sound of retreating footsteps. It was the pace of Henry D'Arcey, and he strode forward along the hall, down the wide staircase, and his footsteps sounded faintly until he reached the door of his bedroom. There they heard him enter.

The three waited for an hour before they moved. Richard went away and obtained some dark lanterns which he presented to the ladies.

The hour of twelve sounded loudly as the great bell tolled.

"Now come," said Richard, softly.

They opened the back entrance and came into a narrow corridor. They went along, and wound around, and turned, and ascended and descended until all idea of locality was lost, and nothing remained but a dim impression of unending labyrinthine turnings.

"Where are you taking us to?" cried Irene, as they ascended a winding staircase.

"Where you were before," replied Richard.

"Strange place," muttered Irene; "there is no end of secret passages and mysterious dens."

At last the guide paused. Taking out a small key he unlocked what seemed part of the dead wall, but was in reality a narrow door. Irene and her mother uttered a cry of pleasure and surprise as they found the chamber of their wishes immediately before them.

"Well, this is a strange way to come here."

"Ah, ma'am," said Richard, "there are stranger things than this about old halls and castles. Beacon Hall's a wonderful place, ma'am. There's few such halls left as Beacon Hall, ma'am. Except that it is a pity it's in such hands. O, if only Master Lionel would come. But here is the chamber."

"Why, he has left everything just as it was," said Irene.

"Yes ma'am, he didn't suppose he would have visitors. He will come down early to resume his labors here."

"Ha!" said Irene. "Here is his accursed letter of betrayal to the Russian czar!" She snatched from the desk the cypher letter and glanced over the page. "It is inscrutable, but it may be useful in our vengeance," she whispered to her mother, and placed it in her bosom.

"Fool that he is, the desk is open," said Madame Arbanon, pointing to the key, which with its attendant bunch remained in the keyhole. "Surely Providence favors us as we attempt to get our rightful property. If the papers be any where, they should be here."

Irene raised the lid. They searched narrowly but could not find what they desired. They took the keys and unlocked all the smaller drawers, but met with no success. The papers were not to be found.

"Here is a drawer," said Richard, pointing to a panel, which upon striking, sent back a hollow sound; "yes, this is a drawer, and here," he added, after looking and feeling in its vicinity for some time, "here is the key-hole."

He tried the most peculiar key of the bunch in this key-hole, which was underneath the drawer. He pushed it and the drawer sprang open.

Irene uttered a low exclamation of joy. Madame Arbanon grasped eagerly a roll of parchment, upon the outside of which she read her husband's name; she took, also, a bundle of papers which lay beside it, inscribed with the same title.

"Here is something more," said Irene, taking a slip of parchment, covered with obscure cypher writing. "I cannot read it, but some one may get the key. It will criminate this wretched man."

"Now we have all. Haste, Irene, haste!" cried Madame Arbanon, to whom the excitement of the occasion seemed to have given the fire and energy of youth.

"Hark!" said Richard, hastening to the usual entrance of the room. "I hear footsteps." As he spoke, the usually cold, indifferent expression of his features assumed an instinct and vividness that showed the power of the man when necessity challenged him.

"Indeed somebody is coming," said Madame Arbanon.

"Haste, haste, to the secret door!" said Richard.

The two ladies immediately obeyed, as the sound of steps grew nearer and nearer, and Richard, pausing but for a moment longer to assure himself, cast a trembling and anxious look, at the disarranged paper on the desk, and following his mistress, drew the stout door to the wall, closing it noiselessly.

"One moment more would have given me time to arrange those papers, but now," whispered Richard, "I fear all is up with you, ma'am. What should have brought him out at this hour?"

In the meantime, Henry D'Arcey entered with a lamp in his hand, passed by the desk where his papers lay, and opening a small standing case that stood in one corner of the spacious room, took from it a small vial, and approaching the desk, sat down the lamp upon it, examined the label, and putting the vial to his lips, swallowed a mouthful of the anodyne preparation it contained, and then replacing it from whence he took it, passed quietly from the room.

"Thank Heaven, he's gone," whispered Richard, who had stood with breath suppressed, regarding the whole from an open crack of the secret door. "He's gone!"

Entering the room once more, he bid them pause for him a single moment.

Quickly, yet carefully, Richard closed all the drawers, and arranged everything, even to the smallest paper, in the manner in which it lay when they entered the room. Then departing from the chamber, they closed the door, and with the servant for guide, the three returned to their room, along the winding passage.

At half past two, three persons left Beacon Hall and stole swiftly but silently up the road. Two entered a carriage, and onward darted the swift horses, bearing off the fugitives.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A PLEASANT SCENE.

One of the pleasantest, as well as one of the most curious scenes of the campaign in the Crimea, occurred recently, near Inkermann. The valley of the Tchernaya at that point narrows until the cliffs rise from either side of the stream within easy rifle shot of each other, and upon the summit of these cliffs the marksmen of the adverse armies were posted in ambuscade, for the purpose of picking off their opponents on the other side. The order to discontinue hostilities arrived in both armies at the same time, and for a whole day not a shot was fired. On the second day there was somewhat of a commotion among the Russians, and a group of soldiers descended towards the stream. Several French and English troops descended from the other side, to meet them, and a tall, handsome Russian, with bushy black whiskers and moustache, assuming the office of spokesman, sprang upon a rock and called out "Johnny Bono!" This was at once the signal for a general exchange of friendly salutations. Cigars and tobacco were thrown across, and at length the Russians felled a high tree across the water and invited their late adversaries to pay them a visit. Over poured the delighted French and English, and their polite entertainers, after showing them all the curiosities of the famous Inkermann rocks, the Rock Chapel and the underground barracks, and treating them to all the eatables and drinkables which they could muster, escorted them safely back to the river.—*Portfolio.*

SLEEP.

Observation and scientific experiment constantly confirm the fact that *the brain is nourished, repaired, during sleep.* If then, we have not sleep enough, the brain is not nourished, and like everything else, when deprived of sufficient nourishment, withers and wastes away, until the power of sleep is lost, and the whole man dwindles to skin and bone, or dies a maniac!

By all means, sleep enough, give all who are under you sleep enough, by requiring them to go to bed at some regular hour, and to get up the moment of spontaneous waking in the morning. Never waken up any one, especially children, from a sound sleep, unless there is urgent necessity to do so; it is cruel to do so; to prove this, we have only to notice how fretful and unhappy a child is, when waked up before the nap is out. If the brain is nourished during sleep, it must have most vigor in the morning, hence the morning is the best time for study; then the brain has most strength, most activity, and works most clearly. It is the midnight lamp which floods the world with sickly sentimentalists, false morals, rickety theology, and all those harum scarum dreams of human elevation, which abnegate Bible teachings.—*Dr. Hall's Monthly.*

We are but passengers of a day, whether it is in a stage-coach, or the immense machine of the universe. Then, why should we not make the way as pleasant to each other as possible? Short as our journey is, it is long enough to be tedious to him who sulks in his corner, sits uneasy himself and elbows his neighbor to make him uneasy also.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

DEATH OF POOR ROBIN.

BY MRS. E. WELLMONT.

THERE was every summer, a bird's nest in the lofty tree before our cottage door in the country. For several years we had supposed it was the same robin redbreast who favored us with its companionship, and an agreeable acquisition had she proved to our society. When we were wearied with household cares, or fatigued with a long walk by the edge of the river, whither we every morning gathered our wild bouquet, or were tired of chattering blackbirds, or the clatter of human tongues, it was an antidote which never failed to calm and soothe our fretted nerves, to listen to the morning carol of little robin. And then she was our incentive to industry. Rise as early as we would, our bird was before us; and it did seem as if she were pouring out her simple notes of thankfulness, that she was permitted to come again to her accustomed home, the same branch upon which had hung her old nest, until a ferocious storm in midwinter had swept it away; and I imagined she was thinking about her beautiful home—for she, like myself, had been an exile—would that I could understand her language.

Perchance she had been in sunny southern fields, delighting the ears of some invalid friend who, like her, had found our lonely woods and piercing blasts, and cold storms, all too inclement for her feeble frame; and then we remembered the frail sufferer who was sinking even under the temporary prop of the balmy air and mild, serene skies of a bland climate over which the summer wind could not pass in its wildest breeze but it ruffled the emaciated sufferer; yet how did I know but my little robin had poured out her plaintive song into *that* responding heart?

Alas, she could not tell me, nor would she heed me, should I recount my wanderings since last we met. What cared or heeded she of a city's busy hum? What to her, were lighted drawing-rooms, and beauty's smile, and gay voluptuous pleasures? the merry dance, the grand concert or theatrical stars? *Her* melodies were nature's own—the music of kindred birds and the beautiful morning star which still twinkled on when she commenced her early matin. Enough for her, enough for me, she had come again. I had given her my welcome, and she was preparing to take up her abode with me, already had she visited yonder wisp of straw which the reapers had carelessly dropped last autumn, and then she flitted to the sand heap, and the clay bed, and fantastically enough for the most skilful weaver's study, was she planning and placing across given distances, a spire of dried grape, a broken straw, and a rustling leaf, while between the interstices, her weaving was so elaborate, that it excluded sunshine and dew-drops; enough to shame the carpenter and master builder of that Gothic cathedral into which the tiny rain drops had crept, despite his cunning skill, which had marred the fine-wood ceiling, and only rendered conspicuous the more perfect work of the robin, to him who had expended a fortune in rudimental treatises upon art and architecture.

By-and-by the robin had completed her nest. It had been to her a great labor, yet she sang on cheerfully and hopped from twig to branch, and from branch to bush, as if the very impersonation of joy. And then we knew the little nest contained several blue eggs, and we were careful not to disturb our bird by an inquisitive peep, for birds, like human kind, dread the curious gaze; so she sat as long as she chose, and flew off and returned as was her pleasure.

Again, farther on, there was a twittering in that nest, as if things of life were there. The robin had her young brood under her wing, and most carefully and ceaselessly did she redeem and fulfil the duties of a parent. Humble as was the monitor, how useful and instructive was her lesson!

We, too, had a care for her. Grimalkin was kept at bay lest she should seek the tiny beings for her prey; but in an evil hour the destroyer came. The wanton boy upon whom weekly discipline and Sunday school instruction ought to have impressed a spirit of love and tenderness, climbed the tree, and with one ruthless grasp broke the limb upon which the nest reposed, the little birds were displaced, and their protector flew away, terrified and stricken with his crushed hopes; a sad emblem of human hearts over whose desolation many a tear may be shed, while they are mitigated because their reason, higher than the instinct of a bird, bids them turn to their gracious Protector, who heeds the sparrow's fall.

And what became of poor robin? She was indeed a fated bird. We had often besought the cruel sportsman to desist from his inhumanity; still we heard the report of his gun, in defiance of law and entreaty; it would startle us when in calm sunshine the merry birds were soaring on rapid wing, and as we were strolling over the ground whence issued a report from the fire-arms, we pressed our foot against the soft feathers of our beautiful songster, and raising her gently, we found the mark of the sportsman was unerring—a dead line in the robin was dead.

Henceforth our cottage has lost one of its attractive features. The tree may have other songsters, but my *bird* has gone. She was a thing of beauty, fashioned by her Creator to live, and sing, and cheer us with her music, while we fret and chafe with inharmonious, jarring notes. Inhuman sportsman! Why delight thyself in shedding the blood of such an innocent, beautiful piece of gladsome life!

Other robins may come, but their sojourn will be short; the sound of the gun is reverberated; the bird flies from danger. Sportsman, thou hast hushed a note which delighted all who listened to it; thou hast quenched the feeling of humanity, and asserted thy lordly prerogative; and all this, to indulge thy lawless, cruel sport, forgetting that these lowly creatures, the "birds of the air, and the lilies of the field," were the very objects whence the Saviour drew his emblems to instil the choicest lessons of practical wisdom. Go then, and sin no more.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

Rue de la Paix, Paris, June 8th, 1854.

MY DEAR BELLOW:—A recent steamer brought us a letter from Mr. Walsh, published in an American journal, and dating from this city, in which he states that from his experience of the French people, an autocracy seems better suited to them than a democracy. Now, with due deference to Mr. W's opinion, I must say that he must have been surrounded by very bad influences to have arrived at such a conclusion. The last republic was purging itself of its evil elements—the people would have made a good selection of representative rulers in spite of the traitors in and out of the assembly, but for the *coup d'etat* of Louis Napoleon. He struck a successful blow at the liberties of his country, and consequently at the liberties of all Europe, just at the moment when they were about to be established on a sure and permanent basis. The effect of his usurpation has been to paralyze the French mind in its highest sphere of action, and to throw it, perforce, into the path of materialism. As under the first empire, only the very lightest literature and the heaviest science flourishes, owing to the shackles placed upon the press. Those who suppose that the best training for liberty is a course of abject servitude, may agree with Mr. Walsh—I cannot.

Thank Heaven, there is a free press near to Paris—dangerously near, as the master of the French thinks—witness Count Walewski's attempts to muzzle the Belgian press, and to induce the English to aid him. Lord Clarendon dared not favor his attempt, for he knew what a storm of indignation it would create on the other side of the Channel.

But enough of politics. One could almost be content to kiss the rod in this delightful weather of June; the season of public gardens and *fete champetres*. All Paris now danceth in the open air, and there is much marrying and giving away in marriage. Henry Murger tells some amusing stories about the mania for matrimony just now rife. He says that at a certain *cafe*, they keep a notary for the purpose of uniting cooing turtle doves, and that at almost any hour of the day you will hear the call, "Champagne and a notary for No. 5!" The old proverb says, "marry in haste and repent at leisure."

Among the last of the theatrical triumphs of the season, was the success achieved by Ristori, the Italian, in Legouve's tragedy of "Medea." The author is a Frenchman, and his play was rejected by the Français, and so he had it translated into Italian, and played by the great Italian *artiste*, whom your correspondent, in the teeth of all Paris, persists in calling *von grand humling*, They say that Rachel's star has set. Yet Rachel is the finest actress that ever trod the boards of any theatre in any country, and is now in the plenitude of her histrionic power. To me, "age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety," nor is she very old, either; not more than thirty-six, and her exquisite "make up," as you have seen for yourself, deducts at least a dozen years from that figure.

I am on the wing to-day for Versailles, which I have not yet seen. As I have plenty of time before me, I do not intend to "do it" "on time." The pictures alone are said to be worthy the study of months. Yet people usually race through the picture galleries, and bring away little notions of Versailles, except a confused idea of the water-works, which play only on fete days. Do I intend to inflict Versailles upon you, after I have "done it?" Perhaps not. But I feel capable of any enormity.

Yours, in a hurricane of haste,

CHARMION.

STORY OF A HIGHWAYMAN.

Not many years ago, an Irishman, whose finances did not keep pace with the demands made upon his pocket, and whose scorn of honest labor was eminently unfavorable to their being legitimately filled, borrowed an old pistol one day, when poverty had driven him to extremity, and took the highway convenient where he was likely to find a heavy purse.

A jolly old farmer came jogging along, and Pat put him down instantly as a party who possessed those requisites he so much stood in need of himself. Presenting his pistol, he demanded him to "stand and deliver."

The poor fellow forked over some fifty dollars, but finding Pat somewhat of a greenhorn, begged a five to take him home, a distance of about half a mile. The request was complied with, accompanied with a most patronizing air. Old Acres and Boods was a knowing one. Eyeing the pistol, he asked Pat if he would sell it.

"Is it to sell the pistol? Sowi, and it's that same thing I'll be after doing! What will ye be after giving for it?"

"I'll give you the five dollar bill for it."

"Done! and done's enough between two gentlemen. Down with the dust, and here's the tool for you."

The bargain was made by immediate transfer. The moment the farmer got the weapon, he ordered Pat to shell out, and threatened to blow his brains out if he refused.

Pat looked at him with a comical leer, and buttoning his breeches pockets, sung out:

"Blow away, ould boy! d——l take the bit of powder's in it."

We believe the old man never told the last part of the story but once, and that was by the purest accident.—*Saturday Evening Gazette.*

HOW TO GAIN REPUTATION.

A French author finding his reputation impeded by the hostility of the critics, resolved to adopt a little stratagem to assist him in gaining fame and money in spite of his enemies. He dressed himself in a workmanlike attire, and repaired to a distant province, where he took lodgings at a farrier shop, in which he did a little work every day at the forge and anvil. But the greater part of his time was secretly devoted to the composition of three large volumes of poetry and essays, which he published as the works of a Journeyman Blacksmith. The trick succeeded; all France was in amazement; the poems of this "child of nature," this "untutored genius," this "inspired son of Vulcan," as he was now called, were immediately praised by the critics, and were soon praised by everybody. The harmless deceit filled the pockets of the poor poet, who laughed to see the critics writing incessant praise on an author whose every former effort they made a point of abusing.—*Lady Lee.*

Earnestness is the root of greatness and heroism. "They are in earnest," said not "They are only joking," is the epitaph which history has inscribed in letters of light, or of blood, on the tombs of her illustrious—the heroes, martyrs and teachers.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

I MISS THY FAREWELL KISS, LOVE.

BY LIEUT. HOLM, U. S. N.

My bark awaits thy shore, love,
The morning sun beams o'er the sea;
It glids the ocean wave, love—
I wait a last adieu from thee.

Hark! a strain of music wild
From the restless, heaving billows,
Woees me, ocean's saddened child,
To their witching, wavy pillows.

Seemeth it like death to part—
Smile on me but once again!
That were Lethe to my heart,
Robbing absence half its pain!

Thus sang I unto my love,
But he never sang to me;
And the sun rode high above,
And my bark rode far at sea.

'Twas a bitter, bitter parting.
But the pang I strove to hide;
And no treacherous murmur starting,
Breathed I for my plighted bride.

Seemed I blithe, and gay, and glad,
To the ken of stranger's eye;
"Merrie men" ne'er deemed me sad,
When I sent them all on high.

But I deemed her cold and soulless,
And she did not love me well;
Had I read her heart, 'twould shown me
What her tongue could never tell.

Isabel—my worshipped idol—
All the world of love to me,
Hopelessly locked in her castle,
Could not e'en my banner see.

That was why she did not grant me
One fond, lingering, farewell kiss.
Cruel guardian! now I warn you,
You will, ere long, rue all this.

I miss thy farewell kiss, love!
Again my bark is on the sea—
The breezes swell the sails above—
My "merrie men" obey but me.

To-night the moon is veiled, love!
My bark rides 'neath the shady lea—
Thou in my arms, imprisoned dove,
Shalt bound across the waves with me.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

STORY OF A STAR.

BY RICHARD CRANSHAW.

It twinkled and glittered in at the window on the child, as she lay watching it and pondering upon it, and weaving all sorts of strange fancies within her little brain as to its probable history; and it seemed, as she gazed fixedly upon it, as though it were actually laughing in huge enjoyment of her bewilderment. It winked and glittered up there so far, far off, until her eyes ached and became heavy, although sleep did not appear to weigh upon her eyelids, as she still wonderingly watched the beautiful light, shining in at her chamber window.

Twinkling and glittering, it at length began slowly and gradually to descend from its dark blue home, and seemed to be actually approaching towards her, downwards, downwards through the clear night sky! And, O wonder! as it came closer and closer, she saw that it became a starry ornament shining upon the brow of a bright angel, whose white fleecy wings cleaved the air towards the little window of her room, and who, a moment after, stood silently gazing upon her by her bedside, with a sweet smile hovering upon her lips, and a mild radiance beaming from her beautiful eyes.

And her old friend the star glittered through the little room brighter than ever, and she looked enraptured upon the angel countenance by her side, and then upon the gemmy ornament shining so lustrously above her head. She read nothing but love for her in the eyes fixed upon her, and knew that no harm could befall her from so holy and so gentle a being as was this sweet spirit of the star.

The angel spoke to her:

"Does Minna wonder at the star leaving its home in the sky, and descending to stand beside her little bed, while the hum of the surrounding city is hushed, and while the soft mantle of night has fallen upon the dim looking houses and the peaceful streets? Minna remembers the green grave that stands under the old tree near by her father's country home, beneath whose mound she has been told a sister was laid long years ago? That sister is now her own angel guardian, hovering ever near her—by the crowded wayside, and by her sleeping pillow; in her hour of gleeful joy, and when her knee is bent in holy prayer. She will be always there, silently watching over her, and her voice will only be heard to approve a kindly deed or virtuous resolve, or else to warn her beseechingly from the path of evil. Her tongue will be mute to all save her she guards, and she alone will feel the sweet reward of peace which she bestows upon her. Would Minna know her name? 'Tis Conscience!"

Voices in the silent air repeated, "Conscience!" The summer winds wafted it to and fro. Whispering echoes murmured it around her. The very moonbeams seemed to write it in lines of silver upon the wall. She never could forget it—that listening, awe struck child!

The angel spoke again:

"When my voice shall be unheeded, and my darling grows weary of her guardian's watchful love, then, and not until that hour, will she sadly turn her face away, and take her flight from her forever! Let Minna treasure this within her heart, and seek to always win the presence of her spirit friend—of her angel sister—of her *conscience!*"

The child raised her hands in silent prayer that this friend might never, never leave her. A brighter light seemed to shine from the twinkling star, and a sweeter smile to play upon the angel's lips as she did so.

"Minna shall look upon some of the windings of the great path of life, and let her treasure up the lesson of wisdom which is learned from these pictures of the world around about her. Come with me; fear nothing—come!"

So saying, the bright being held out her hand to Minna, and she found herself, she knew not how, flying with the fleetness of the wind through the ambient air, and with no more effort than if she still reclined upon her own soft bed at home.

Midnight and darkness were around them, but the star on the angel's forehead shed a bright light on all around them, and the child saw that they were standing in a miserable room. A little boy of about her own age knelt by the side of his wretched bed, and though no sound came from his lips, the tears rolled down his cheeks, and his little heart seemed overwhelmed with some great sorrow, as it heaved in the fullness of his grief.

"He prays for his wicked father," whispered the angel. "Let us see him at this same moment and behold the effect of his child's prayer."

Midnight and darkness again wrapped all objects in obscurity, but as the radiance of the star made all things visible, a far different scene was spread out before them. They stood in an abode of luxury. Soft carpets lined the floor, and gorgeous pictures hung upon the painted walls. Great mirrors reflected back each other's light, and ornaments of costly value stood around them on every side. For a time the child gazed upon the scene with delighted eyes, but then, turning towards the spirit, she would have questioned her as to their coming thither. The angel pointed mutely towards the door, and as she did so, the sound of a stealthy footstep was heard in the hall without. A figure whose face she could not see, enveloped as it was in some dark substance, stepped cautiously into the room, and by the light of a dark lantern looked curiously round about him.

His purpose could not be mistaken, but he turned away contemptuously from the ornaments around him and muttering to himself in a low tone, left the apartment as noiselessly as he had entered. The angel beckoned to the child to follow, and Minna saw that *he* ascended the staircase in the hall, and she also saw with a shudder that he drew from his pocket a something that gleamed, and advanced with it firmly grasped in his hand. Following closely to him, they saw that he entered a handsome chamber, and from various drawers and other receptacles which flew open at his well-skilled touch, proceeded to take articles of value and place them noiselessly in a canvass bag which he had brought for the purpose.

He ransacked everything upon which he could lay his hand, yet still appeared unsatisfied. At length he approached towards an adjoining room, and as he opened the door and threw the light of his dark lantern around, he saw that it was the sleeping-place of a child. It was a fairy-like bower, and every object suggested the innocence and purity that dwelt therein. The fleecy curtains of the little couch were like clouds encircling a slumbering cherub, and the moonlight shed a halo round its head that might be likened to rays of softened glory.

Softly, almost with reverence, the man with robbery and even murder hanging over his guilty soul, approached towards that infant's couch, and looked upon it there, as it slept on in unconscious security. One little arm was extended upon the soft white coverlet, and the red lips were just parted enough to show a row of white pearls nestled away there between them. The flaxen ringlets lay like golden threads extended upon the pillow, and a smile was breaking over its face as the midnight intruder gazed spell-bound upon it.

What thoughts are stealing through his mind, as he looks so steadfastly and yet so gently upon the sleeping child? Is the image of another, like even unto this—as holy and as beautiful as this, before him? Do his thoughts wander towards the little one who has so often nestled close to his heart, in the wretched home of poverty and sin wherein he dwells? Who shall know the workings of that human heart in which *all* good is not yet stifled!

List! The lips of the slumberer move, and as the ear of the man catches the sound of the one word uttered, the two invisible listeners see that a tear trembles for a moment, and then rolls silently down his rugged cheek. It is the simple name of "father" which has fallen from the child's lips, and this is the talisman which has unlocked the closed up heart and caused the precious tears of repentance to flow in rich and bounteous floods. Minna heard the angel's voice:

"The child's prayer is answered. The untutored lisping of the infant, perchance, has saved the immortal soul of that deeply erring father! Blessed is the pure offering from the lips of innocence, and more acceptable than that which arises from altars of gold and from the midst of temples wrought in grandeur, and towering loftily towards the clouds!"

They saw that he went upon his way, nor touched an article from that splendid dwelling, but left as stealthily as he had entered. Said the angel to the child:

"He goes with a resolution within his heart to strive and sin no more, and he does it *for his child's sake!*"

The veil of night appears now rent asunder. The pair are standing, still invisible, in the midst of a busy crowd. Each hurries on his way, and little heed is taken by the passers-by of a blind beggar, who stands with mutely outstretched hands imploring charity by the wayside. His locks are silvered with age, and the hand of Time has deeply lined his aged face, and touched with palsied finger the hand once nerved with the firmness of manhood. His only companion was his dog, and the creature ever and anon gently licked his master's withered hand, as though to assure him that he had yet *one* faithful friend in the helplessness of his old age. The old man patted him kindly, and murmured: "Poor Tray! poor Tray!"

A great confusion, and cries of "fire!" are heard on every side. The crowd becomes dense, and the old man is jostled and pushed this way and that, until at length he loses his feeble grasp upon the dog, who is in a moment borne with the crowd until he has lost all traces of his master. The unfortunate old man, when he found that his dog was indeed lost beyond doubt, could control his feelings no longer, and tears gathered in his sightless eyes and rolled down upon his withered cheeks.

"Why, how now, father! What's gone amiss?"

A hearty, whole-souled voice that! It is a young sailor, who has seen with pity the helpless old man standing there, and who now approaches and lays a rough but kindly hand upon his shoulder.

"Lost your dog, have you? Well, that's bad; but never mind, don't take it so to heart, for look ye, I'll get you another! So cheer up, old mate, and if you'll just make a stanchion of my arm, and give the word where to go, I'll tow you there in a jiffy!"

The young sailor gave his honest arm to the old man, and proceeded to lead him towards his home, directed by his blind companion. His open, frank countenance glowed with the satisfaction that always arises from a kindly deed, and it was a beautiful sight to watch him, as he measured his own firm step to the slow and cautious footfall of the sightless old man.

They proceeded along the street, and the angel and child followed closely on their path. Winding through dense alleys and over rotten pavements, past time-stained and tottering buildings, they at length reached a crazy wooden tenement, filled full to overflowing with poverty-stricken humanity, and here it was the old man stopped, saying here he was, at home.

"Home!" repeated the young man in a low tone. "He has not always seen such days as these, and this is but a sorry place to end them, poor old soul!" Then in a louder tone he bade him lead the way to his room, "and then," he added, "we'll see whether your old days can't be brightened up a bit."

They mounted the rotten staircase until very near the top of the building, and the old man opening a door in the darkened passage, ushered the stranger into a clean but wretchedly furnished room, where he saw with surprise that a young girl was seated sewing.

"This, sir, is my daughter," said the blind man. "My old age would have been indeed dark and desolate had it not been lighted with the sweet sunlight of her presence. Ruth, this is a kind gentleman who has seen me safely home, for poor Tray is lost, and but for his aid I might have wandered away, no one knows where."

The young girl lifted her eyes to his face, and holding out her hand, said:

"O, sir, you have been very kind, and though we can give you nothing but thanks, you will be rewarded in the satisfaction of knowing you have done a kindly action, and God will bless you, sir, for it. Be assured he will."

He had not spoken a word since his entrance into the room, but had taken her proffered hand mechanically and stood, as in a trance, gazing upon her face.

"You have not asked the gentleman to be seated, Ruth," said the old man. "Wont you take a chair, sir?" and he pointed with his staff in the direction of the seat his daughter had just arisen from, and was the only one in the room.

"Ruth!" mused his unconscious listener. "That name and that face! What dream is this which has come over me? Tell me," addressing the old man, "what is the name you bear?"

"For long years past, I have been known only as 'Blind Simon,' but once, when fortune smiled upon me, and the world around me was not hid as it is now in darkness, I was called Simon Tremain."

He could not see the emotion depicted upon his listener's face, nor the start he gave at the name he uttered, but the young girl saw it, and looked with surprise at him. Mastering himself by an effort, as if speaking to himself, he said:

"Many years ago, I knew a youth by that name. Tremain—George Tremain, I think it was."

"Ah!" said the old man. "Did you then know my poor boy? He ran away and went to sea when but ten years old, and it was but a short time after—let me see, it must be fifteen years ago—I received a letter from the captain of the vessel saying that my unhappy boy had fallen overboard in a gale of wind and was lost. This child was then scarcely three years old, and she of course remembers nothing of it, but many a tear have we both shed over my lost boy—her unknown brother, who was drowned at sea."

There was silence in the apartment and both the young girl and her father shed tears at the recollection, while the stranger said nothing, but let them weep awhile before addressing the old man again. In a low tone, he spoke:

"There have been times known when men have fallen overboard and been given up for lost, that some stray log of timber or a fragment of wreck has proved a means of safety. There have been times known when men have been picked up providentially by a passing vessel and gone to distant countries, from whence all communications with those at home have miscarried or been lost. *I* knew of such a case as that, when the person was taken to the East Indies, and then after shipping as a sailor on board of the vessel that saved him, sailing for years to the very town where his relations lived and never knowing anything of their existence. He had travelled to the home of his boyhood and had been told that they had been long gone from their old habitation, and every one of them was now no longer living—all had died."

He paused for a moment and wiped the perspiration from his forehead, while the old man sat as if turned into stone and in the direction of his voice.

"Once, this same young man—he might have been about my age—arrived in port, and passing along the street, assisted an old man who had lost his dog—much as you have done, mate," he added, seeing a movement as if the old man was about to rise. "He assisted him, I say, and saw him to his wretched home."

The old man had risen in great excitement, and stood with his hands stretched out before him, and trembling in every limb.

"Arrived there, he heard the story told of his own loss, and a moment after found him clasped to the heart of his sister Ruth, and of the old man who had dandled him upon his knee a little helpless child. Sister! father! don't you know me? O, tell me! don't you know me?"

They were all clasped close in each other's arms, and human hearts felt for a time nearly the spirit felicity of the spheres above! The old man raised his sightless eyes towards heaven, and murmured forth: "This, my son, was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found. Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

They are now seated in a loving group, and the angel and child still lingers, unwilling to leave the presence of happiness like this, when a rattling as of a chain ascending the stairs draws their attention. A scratching noise is heard at the door, and as the young girl opens it, in bounds the delighted Tray, whose instinct had been his sure guide to his old master's home. He is soon nestled lovingly down at the old man's feet, and the home group is now quite complete.

Again all was darkness. The child looked round and saw that the light of the star gleamed in the far off distance as though her companion and guide was leaving her.

"Remember," came a voice from the obscurity, which she recognized as that of her spirit friend "remember what you have this night seen, and let the lessons be treasured up within your heart. Remember, also, that my eye is upon you, and my voice will be near you in the hour of trial. Farewell now, Minna, farewell! Farewell, my darling."

The voice became more and more distant, and fainter came the words—"Farewell, Minna! Farewell, Minna!" She stretched out her hand to wave it towards her departing friend, and as she did so she touched her mother's face bending over her little couch in her own well remembered room at home. The morning sun was shining brightly in at the open window, and her mother's voice was calling to her—"Minna! Minna! my darling!"

It had been all a dream; but with happy dreams like this, she felt she could have wished to dream and dream forever!

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LETTER NO. V.

WARWICK, England, May 17, 1855.

MR. BALLOU:—Dear Sir,—Since I wrote you last, we have had a spell of cold and disagreeable weather, and our walks have been confined almost entirely to the precincts of the town, which are rather limited. Every day we find something to wonder at, in this quaint old place. Last Saturday was market day, and as our windows look down upon the market-place, we had a full view of all the performances. The market-place is a paved court, of some two or three acres. At one end is a large stone building, the upper story of which is a museum, and the lower story is entirely open, with a stone floor, and enclosed with an iron fence. This latter is the "corn market."

On Saturday morning, little stalls were set out all over the market-place, which were speedily filled up by the country people with their produce. It was droll enough to see them come in, old men and old women, with their queer, clumsy-looking, two-wheeled market-wagons, drawn likely enough by a skeleton of a horse, or a lean, long-eared donkey. When the operations were fairly commenced, the scene was really amusing. Several stalls were occupied entirely by butchers, with their extensive variety of beef, veal and mutton. But by far the most tempting were the tables of the old women, covered with the spring vegetables and greens, of every variety. They were arranged with quite an eye for the æsthetic, evidently. There were delicate little bunches of bright scarlet radishes in temptation, with the green leaves around them. Plates of young mustard and onions were interspersed among bunches of asparagus, and willow baskets were piled up with heads of brocoli and young cabbage. Then in the background were mounds of lemons, apples and oranges, forming altogether a very pleasing variety. In the corn market, rows of farmers were seated upon benches, with baskets full of dainty rolls of fresh butter and snowy eggs. Then there were fish and fowl of every variety, and one old woman selling home-made molasses candy.

Towards night, a crockery-merchant brought his wares and spread them out upon the stones, covering several rods. As the farmers' wives disposed of their vendibles, they gathered around him, and after chaffering awhile, and trying the "ding" with their hard knuckles, went away, one after another, with a new pitcher for the beer at dinner, or a gaudily-painted china-cup for the baby, or, may be, a set of cups and saucers. At all events, they seemed well pleased. It was after sundown when they all dispersed, and all the evening little boys were crying up, "oranges and lemons, cheap," by gaslight.

One day, this week, we took a walk to the "common," which our landlady had praised famously. "It is a fine place for a walk," she said, "a very fine place;" and went on to tell how it was left to the town by one of the old earls of Warwick, and how many of the old houses in town had "common rights." "Our 'ouse," she said, forgetting her "h," as all the common people do, and a great many who consider themselves gentry, "our 'ouse 'as two common rights, we can pasture an 'orse and a cow, but not *two* 'orses, or two cows." Following her directions, we found the "common," at length, quite out of the town. It was a broad, level enclosure of about a hundred acres, with not a tree or shrub upon it, but upon which I counted about eighty "'orses and cows." I must confess, I did not fancy it for walking upon as much as our landlady seemed to, but then, you know, we are all liable to opinions.

This town of Warwick is, or ought to be, famous for its taverns. Why, every other house, almost, is a tavern or an inn. And of all names, they certainly have the most preposterous. One of the best in town is "The Woolpack," another, "The Punch Bowl," and another "The Bear and Bacchus." One is "The Three Horse-Shoes," another, "The Three Suns," and still another, "The Cat and Gridiron." It is a most singular kind of nomenclature, founded upon some principle which I have not been able to discover.

In our walk yesterday, we were passing a large stone-front house just as an old gentleman rode up to it. The front door opened at the end of the narrow pavement, and as the old gentleman stepped in for a moment, the horse, which was a beautiful, glossy creature, turned his eyes after him as earnestly as if he were expecting an invitation to go in himself. And sure enough the doctor, as he evidently was, turned round immediately and beckoned to the horse, which walked straight in, and stepped carefully over the mats, to the green court that we could see at the other end of the hall. It was the first time I ever saw a horse invited in at the front door of a gentleman's mansion.

On our way home, we passed the corn market, of which I told you. Several children were gathered about it, peering curiously through the iron paling. As we came nearer, we saw the cause of their lingering—a sight which had never met our eyes before, and probably never will again. It was two men seated on a low bench, without any back, their feet made fast in "the stocks." Their faces wore a look of shame and half concealed anger, and they averted their eyes as we passed by. It is a singular method of punishment for the present day, and I doubt not solitary imprisonment for the same length of time would be more beneficial, for this public exposure must of necessity be hardening, and "shame being lost, all virtue is lost."

One of the most curious buildings in Warwick is the Earl of Leicester's Hospital. This building was originally used by the lay fraternities of the Blessed Virgin in the time of Richard II., and is one of the finest specimens of half timber building in the whole region. The exterior of the building much resembles a coarse mosaic of oak and stone, and at one end of it, instead of a clock, is an ancient sun-dial. In the time of Elizabeth, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, her celebrated favorite, obtained the buildings and converted them into a hospital for a master and twelve brethren, and they still remain very much as he left them. The brethren wear the identical badges worn by the first brethren appointed by the earl himself in 1571. Thomas Cartwright, the celebrated Puritan reformer, was one of the first masters, and he lies buried in an adjoining church. In the garden of the hospital is an interesting Egyptian relic, a vase which formerly crowned a Nilometer, one of the pillars which mark the rise of the Nile.

Yours respectfully, J. P. B.

News Glances.

VIOLETS, SWEET VIOLETS.—The Florence (Italy) correspondent of the Newark Daily Advertiser, in his April letter, speaks in eloquent terms of the violet, that floral emblem of truth, which peeps out from the valley and the hillock in such profusion in the vicinity of that city.

A BIBLE FAIR.—We do not often associate fairs and Bibles together. But at the recent annual fair in Manchester, England, a little stall was opened, and in the course of one day eighty-one Bibles and sixty Testaments were sold.

THE BEST TIME.—"I have had considerable experience in transplanting evergreens," says an eastern gentleman, "and strange as it may seem, I am satisfied that about the 4th of July is the best time in the year."

LADIES' MEASUREMENT.—We are curious to know how many feet in female arithmetic go to a mile, because we never met with a lady's foot yet whose shoe was not, to say the very least, "a mile too big for her."

J. P.—The governor of a neighboring State has resolved to make every member of the press a justice of the peace. The members of the editorial fraternity are not particularly famous for *keeping* the peace.

HIGHWAY ROBBERS.—These unpleasant individuals have been operating daringly in New York, lately. The papers are loud in clamoring for more efficiency on the part of the police.

HYDROPHOBIA.—Mad dogs and strawberries are in the New York market. The former are killed, and some do say that both dogs and strawberries are eaten in Gotham.

SWALLOWS.—As a proof of the very valuable services rendered by swallows, it is estimated that one of these birds will destroy, at a low calculation, nine hundred insects per day.

FOGGY.—A fog-bell was lately exhibited in State Street—the Post says, to be operated on by the perplexing *currents* known to exist between the *banks*.

A HEAVY HAUL.—Some burglars in Memphis lately stole a safe containing $3000 in money, and carried it off in a flat boat by way of ballast.

SNOW.—In some sheltered spots in this city, the snow hung on till the latter part of May—a fact without a parallel for many years.

"FASHION."—This famous mare is not dead, as was reported. On the contrary, she is "as well as could be expected."

A WEALTHY PENNSYLVANIAN.—Gen. C. M. Reed, of Erie, is said to own property to the value of five millions of dollars.

CURIOUS.—Billiards make a well known remedy for the blues. The player wields a cue, and it makes him a *cuer*.

MERELY A QUERY.—What's all the world to a man when his wife's a widow?

TOO TRUE.—Folly is always in fashion.

THE FLAG OF OUR UNION

MATURIN M. BALLOU,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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STREET BEGGARS.

Nothing strikes a foreigner more forcibly at his first visit to this country, than the absence of the small number of beggars he sees in our great cities. And the farther he proceeds in his journey, the fewer traces of misery meet his eye. He sees no robust men exhibiting their bronzed hands for charity, because they cannot get work; for here labor is capital, and different is it in the over-populated countries, with their densely packed cities of the European continent, where the frightful contrasts of unbridled luxury and indescribable destitution meet the eye. American, who takes personal cognisance of whatever may be the deficiencies of his country, in the splendor and arts of civilization, when he beholds the sumptuous palaces that he sees about him, with their miles of marble columns, these splendid monuments in which royalty and nobility delight to act, are too dearly purchased at the price of the suffering humanity. Beggary is the curse of Italy; it is the curse of Spain; and even in the imperial Paris, notwithstanding the vigilance of the authorities, it flourishes—if anything, it did can be said to flourish.

The street beggars of Paris are the most ingenious persons in the world. The ingenuity of the amazing tact, and nicely adapt their means of soliciting alms to the character of the individuals, and the quarters of the city they frequent. In the *Place de la Bastille*, a populace throng about the quacks, the mountebanks, and the itinerant musicians, then the beggars reap a harvest. One pretends to be a fellow who has lost his sight by the explosion of a mine; another, a carpenter, who has had his arms (they are nicely buttoned up and pinned by the way); another, a tiler, who has had the use of one leg in consequence of falling from the eight story roof. Charity is no where in Paris, nor is credulity an unknown failing with the laboring man, listening to these appeals to his hard-earned sous, though often at personal sacrifice, and though he knows that work failed him from physical misfortune, to end his miseries by a plunge into the river, rather than beg his bread in the streets.

In the manufacturing streets of Paris, you meet another class of beggars—old men, with long, snowy beards and wooden legs, and young men, surrounded by heaps of ragged and dirty children. The old man takes off his hat, without saying a word, and the woman extends her hand silently, with an appealing look, while the sort of pantomime which especially touches the sensibilities of the passing operative, who is ever open to dramatic appeals. If he has no money, he gives half his loaf of bread—and how generous as he is poor.

On the boulevards St. Martin and St. Denis, mendicity, still dramatic, abandons the streets, and takes to speaking parts. Here you are accosted by a young girl, in a low tremulous voice, who begs a few sous for a dying father, or by a tearful mother solicits the wherewithal to buy a coffin for a dead child; while another, active will tell you of his having been robbed, while tending a steam engine, of his left arm, so much crippled to resume his business, and quite injured enough to be taken care of in the hospital. You will find, even, a petition for publicity a little help to enable him to finish a work that will eclipse Dante's *Inferno* and Milton's Paradise Lost. It is said that some of the beggars own houses, and are very heavy rent tenants!

There are well-dressed beggars, who are the omnibus-hunter, who haunts the neighborhood of the Madeleine. She is an elegant looking woman, who accosts the most respectable she can find. "Sir," says she, "I have left my purse; and instead of taking a cab home, I'll ride home in an omnibus. Will the goodness to lend me six sous to pay your card? I will send the trifle to you immediately."

There is literally no end to the ingenuity of these begging sharpers; and we would advise those ladies and gentlemen who are going over to the continent the present season to be on the lookout, and call up all their shrewdness, if they wish to avoid, while living in the capital of the world, to be the grossest kind.

BROADWAY, NEW YORK.—A Frenchman said of this great avenue, "It is a beautiful street, een *it is finish*." The merchants are doing their best to finish it, and in an elegant style, too. It will be a street

LYNX SHOT.—Two lads in Lebanon lately shot a lynx. These lynxes are very pleasant animals if you happen to meet them unarmed. The one in the Howard Street looks anything but ferocious.

A FACE.—All horses offered for sale must be seven years old. The old Yankee idea right when he said "that seven years old was the most treacherous year for colts."

BINDING.—Binding in all its various styles done at this office, at the lowest rates, and in the shortest period of time.

CALIFORNIA SPORT.—There was a fight between a man and bear fight in Sacramento. We like such things on change.

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BROADWAY, NEW YORK.—A French gentleman said of this great avenue, "It is von beautiful street, *ven it is finish*." The New Yorkers are doing their best to finish it, and in the most elegant style, too. It will be a street of palaces.

LYNX SHOT.—Two lads in Lebanon, N. H., lately shot a lynx. These lynxes are rather unpleasant animals if you happen to encounter them unarmed. The one in the menagerie in Howard Street looks anything but amiable.

A FACT.—All horses offered for sale are just seven years old. The old Yankee jockey was right when he said "that seven years ago was a most tremendjous year for colts."

BINDING.—Binding in all its varieties neatly done at this office, at the lowest rates, and in the shortest period of time.

CALIFORNIA SPORT.—There was lately a bull and bear fight in Sacramento. We often see such things on 'change.

PORK AND BEANS.

There is a good story in Northall's "Before and Behind the Curtain," which will bear reproducing. Many years ago, when the "Maid of Cashmere" was first brought out at the old National Theatre, in New York, there were two friends engaged in the orchestra. One was but an indifferent master of his instrument, the trumpet, and was so weak as to be unable to blow a blast sufficiently strong to announce the approach of Chopelas, to proclaim the reward for the head of the unknown. He was therefore under the necessity of applying to his friend, the Trombone, to assist him. Now the Trombone was inordinately fond of pork and beans, and refused to aid the Trumpet unless upon every such occasion he would agree to furnish him with a supper of his favorite dish. This was readily acceded to, and the refectory was applied to and furnished the fare. For the first two or three nights, all went on very well. At the end of that time, the Trumpet began to entertain serious views of dissolving the connection with the Trombone, and of course cutting off the supplies of pork and beans. In a moment of rashness, the Trumpet gave notice to the Trombone of the annulment of the contract, and essayed to give the piece of music unaided. But alas! the first tang-arang was a failure—it was too thin.

"Pork!" cried the Trumpet to the Trombone, and in an instant the two instruments gave forth in unison a beautiful tang arang.

Just then, the Trombone remembered that nothing had been said about "beans," and suddenly ceased playing.

"Beans!" cried the Trumpet.

"Pork and beans!" asked the Trombone.

"Yes," replied the Trumpet, in frenzy.

"Good!" said the Trombone; "that's enough —here goes!" And he did go, to the infinite relief of the trumpet, as well as to the great delight of the whole orchestra, who were in the secret.

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL.

THE NEW VOLUME.

Week after next we shall commence a new volume of "Ballou's Pictorial," when we shall come before the readers in an entire new dress from top to toe, from head-line to imprint. The immense edition of our paper renders two and often three suits of type necessary each year. The one on which we shall commence *Volume Eleven* of our Pictorial, is now casting, and is of the latest pattern and best material.

We shall also commence in number one of the new volume an admirable novellette by the favorite author of the "Contrabandist," one of the most pleasing tales we have ever published. We have also added several new and popular names to our list of regular contributors, and shall still aim at steady improvement in our widely circulated journal.

In our illustrated department we shall still improve, and have already in hand some of the finest sets of American engravings, taken expressly for us, which have ever been attempted, embracing complete and accurate representations of western and southern cities, with important portraits and delineations of coming events, etc., making volume eleven superior to all of its predecessors.

Subscribe early; now is the time, and thus secure the numbers complete for the entire volume.

THE SOUND DUES.

We are glad to see that some of the English papers are speaking in severe tones of the black mail system pursued by Denmark towards the merchantmen who pass through the Sound on their voyage to and from the Baltic. While, by the recent treaty, the navigation of the Danube is only subject to necessary police and quarantine regulations, "Denmark levies black mail on ships proceeding to the Baltic and northern states of Europe, simply because its provinces border on the entrance to the great gulfs and inlets in which various commercial nations have a common property." We can compare its conduct to nothing else except to that of those robber nobles who built their castles along the Rhine, and, in the good old times so many are sighing after, levied tolls on every unhappy bark that came beneath the shadow of these hornets' nests. It is about time, we should think, for the abolition of all these feudal impositions and relics of barbarism.

A WIFE BY ADVERTISING.—A lady in the town of Westboro', in this State, answered an advertisement for a wife, published in a New York paper, and the advertiser, who was a physician, came on to see her, examined her phrenologically, was satisfied, called the parson, and in a few days they started for the West, where they propose to settle.

MARBLE AND MEN.—Somebody says that while the statues of great men appear larger the nearer you approach them, great men themselves appear smaller the nearer you approach them. Distance has a great deal to do with glory.

JENNY LIND.—The New York Musical World would "not be at all surprised if Jenny Lind were to come to this country and sing again under Barnum's auspices. She could not do a better thing for herself or for him."

MILITARY.—The volunteer companies have come out of winter quarters, and the drum and tramp of armed men, and flash of bayonets and sabres, again enliven our streets. "In peace prepare for war."

ENTERPRISE.—They talk of bringing the sea from Havre to Paris by means of a canal. We shall *see* what we shall *see* about it in season. The story seems rather salty.

OPPOSED TO LAGER.—"Men who drink beer think beer," said Dr. Johnson. Perhaps that will account for the maddiness of German metaphysics.

EDITORIAL INKDROPS.

The benefit designed for the late Wm. Mitchell, of New York, was given to his widow.

The New York Sun advises ladies to reserve their fine fall dresses for the house.

There will be a French company at Niblo's next year, managed by Sarah Felix.

Mr. Dallas, our minister to England, attends the queen's levees in plain dress.

Bayard Taylor travelled two years in Europe for $500, including his passage there and back.

Lovers are cheap boarders; for they live on smiles and kisses—furnishing themselves.

Four men buried in a coal mine in Ohio, were saved after thirteen days' durance.

All coins bearing the effigy of Liberty are to be suppressed in France.

Four of Dupont's powder mills at Wilmington blew up lately, killing three men.

Mr. Dallas made a fine speech at the Literary Fund dinner, in London.

A weekly paper is the poor man's library and every body's blessing.

The Havana fruit trade this season is estimated at $100,000.

Peruvian guano dusted on moist vines is said to kill the striped bug.

Economy is no disgrace; it is better living on a little than outliving a great deal.

Stringless peas, eaten pods and all, are much cultivated in France and Turkey.

A wolf and several rattlesnakes, caught in Texas, were lately sent to England.

The man who asked "How's Sophia?" stirred up all the fire department.

In Franklin county, Mass., there was snow six feet deep last month.

The frigate Cumberland, now at Charlestown, is to be fitted up for service.

Ianthe, Countess of Ellenborough, is now the wife of a petty Arab loafer.

In Ohio they have a young eagle hatched and nursed by a Shanghai.

A farmer in Worcester county kills crows by corn steeped in strychnine.

A band of 150 Kentuckians lately joined Gen. Walker at Nicaragua.

Lord Clarendon insists that the British enlisting agents here did not break our laws.

Col. Greene's (of Worcester) carbines have been approved by a French military commission.

SUBURBAN SORROWS.

With all our love for the country—and it amounts to enthusiasm—we advise no one who loves the city dearly, and yet fancies he has a taste for rural life, to go forth and pitch his tent in the environs, fancying that he is sure to find without the city limits a perfect garden of Eden. There are drawbacks to every rustic Paradise. Gentlemen who luxuriate on winter pears by a city fireside at Christmas, have no adequate idea of the trouble of raising them. *Duchesse d'Angoulemes* are not necessarily suggestive of borers and fire-blight; nor are Ribstone pippins associated with caterpillars in the minds of comfortable citizens. Yet in the country you will find they go together. The "shepherd's pipe" is a pretty instrument in Arcadian tales, but in this country a shepherd's pipe is a short "dudheen," wafting on the air the fumes of rank tobacco. Eggs are delicious in the thousand shapes that French cookery gives them; but hens that wont lay and will set are sad trials to one's patience. Cream adds much to the enjoyment of the coffee at Mrs. Haven's; but breachy cattle, saddled with continual damages, do not add much to the *agremens* of your amateur farmer. Then, if you live out of town, you must buy a horse—and if you want to know what that means, get Fred. Cozzens's "Sparrowgrass Papers," and read them. The amount of all this gossip, boiled down to a portable moral is this: that every phase of life has its trials and troubles, and you are sure to meet with them whether you pay your taxes in the city or out of it.

ARCHITECTURAL EXTRAVAGANCE.—The mania for building costly houses in New York city is said to be subsiding. The rivalry among the millionaires in the building of palatial residences at one time menaced ruinous consequences. The most elegant building in New York cost about $225,000; and there are at least a dozen, the aggregate cost of which was as many hundred thousand dollars. This magnificence made both natives and foreigners stare.

A FANCY FIREMAN.—During a late fire at Placerville, California, McKean Buchanan, left the stage of the theatre, and, without doffing his Cardinal Richelieu dress, worked away at the pumps like a true hero. His red petticoat and white beard must have looked rather funny "bobbing around."

THE LAST REPORT.—The largest gun in the world is at Bajapoor, in India. It weighs forty tons.

"Every time they fire it off
It takes a horn of powder;
It makes a noise like fey'ther's gun,
Only a t. rifon louder."

LOUIS NAPOLEON.—The Rev. Mr. Stewart says that Louis Napoleon behaved like a "nice young man" when he lived in New York. It was another Napoleon who was a naughty boy. However, the mistake is "all in the family."

AN EXPENSIVE BABY.—It cost France forty thousand francs to baptize the Prince Imperial. Really, the infant is becoming a "crying sin." As he is a babe "in arms," he has been enrolled in the Grenadier Guard.

A BENEFIT.—At New York, recently, Mrs. Julia Dean Hayne realized more than a thousand dollars by her benefit. She is coining money and reaping laurels by the armful.

HATS OFF!—It is said that there is to be a national convention of hatters somewhere sometime in July. That is not *fur* off.

THE COOLIES.—The Coolies in Havana are let out for eight years by contractors, at $180 a head.

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL DRAWING-ROOM COMPANION,

For the present week embraces the following contents:

"Stray Leaves from the Autobiography of a Shiftless Woman."
"Flowers," a poem by SARAH A. NOWELL.
"The First State Prisoner," a race sketch by that venerable octogenarian, GRANT THORBURN.
"The Sacrifice," a story by Mrs. N. T. MUNROE.
"Lines to Madame ——," by "JAY HUNGERFORD."
"A Prayer of Affection," by GENEVRE M. BUSH.
"The House in Shadow," a tale by FRANCES M. CREIGHTON.
"The Gipsey Chant," by BLANCHE D'ANTONIE.
"The Cape Ann Wreck," a true sketch of our own seashore, by WILLIAM B. OLIVER.
"Song of the Heart," lines by IRENE MONTAGUE.
"Who was the Lady?" a tale by J. WOOLLEY GILLETT.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

A capital view of Chelsea, as seen from East Boston, one of the pleasant resorts of its suburban towns.

Portrait of the late Madame Emile de Girardin, a lady who ranked high among the accomplished literary women of France.

A view of the Entrance to the Arsenal of Venice.

Representation of Mexican Females preparing Tortillas.

A fine series of views in the pleasant town of Taunton, giving a sketch of the Episcopal Church; view of Church Square; a picture of the Green; and a fine representation of the residence of William Mason.

Portraits of the Misses FOX, the original spirit-rappers.

A graphic view of the Wreck of the Chilian steamer the Candor, on the South American coast, January 30, 1856.

An artistic delineation of the beautiful cradle of the young French imperial prince.

A picture of the city of Van, in Armenia.

☞ The Pictorial is for sale at all the Periodical Depots in the United States, at 6¼ cents a copy.

☞ One copy of THE FLAG, and one copy of the PICTORIAL, when taken together, for $4 00 per annum.

Foreign Items.

There are more than six hundred places of worship in London.

With much regret we learn from Vienna that the great basso, Staudigl, has gone mad.

An imperial decree announces that the Russian army is to be reduced to a peace establishment.

Paris is fast becoming a place where no one can live unless he is master of a very large fortune.

The Sultan has sent a magnificent present of pearls to Victoria, and jewelled swords and saddles to Napoleon.

A statue of John Wesley is to be erected, by subscription, at his birth-place, Epworth, in North Lincolnshire.

By a late decision of the French government, professorships of agriculture are to be founded in all the principal educational establishments of France.

The States of the Duchy of Meiningen have just decided that no Jew can be an elector, a juryman, a public functionary, an advocate, or attorney.

The pistols which O'Connell used on the occasion of his celebrated duel with D'Esterre, were sold by auction in Limerick, lately, for 27s the pair.

The greatest clothing establishment in the world is that of M. Godillot, in Paris. He employs sixty-six steam sewing machines, and one thousand girls.

Three Parisian sculptors are each at work on a bust of the late Madame Girardin. Victor Hugo in his recent volumes, "Les Contemplations," has dedicated some beautiful lines to her memory.

Dewdrops of Wisdom.

It is only good souls that know how much glory there is in being good.

Countries are not cultivated in proportion to their fertility, but to their liberty.

Genius unexerted, is no more genius than a bushel of acorns is a forest of oaks.

A proper secrecy is the only mystery of able men. Mystery is the only secrecy of weak and cunning ones.

If I study, it is for no other science than what treats of the knowledge of myself, and instructs me how to live and die well.

Ambition often puts men upon doing the meanest offices; so climbing is performed in the same posture as creeping.

So soft a pillow is death to a good man, so willingly to put down he leave the world, as a weary laborer goes to bed at night.

It is not the height to which men are advanced that makes them giddy; it is the looking down with contempt upon those below them.

Alonzo of Arragon was wont to say of himself that he was a great necromancer, for that he used to ask counsel of the dead—meaning his books.

It is easier to think right without doing right, than to do right without thinking right. Just thoughts may, and often do fail of producing just deeds; but just deeds are sure to beget just thoughts.

A Sunday in the country is so holy in its repose, such a pensive quiet reigns over the face of nature, that every restless passion is charmed down, and we feel all the natural religion of the soul gently springing up within us.

Those can most easily dispense with society who are most calculated to adorn it; they only are dependent on it who possess no mental resources; for though they bring nothing to the general mart, like beggars, they are too poor to stay at home.

Joker's Budget.

When is charity like a top? When it begins to *hum*.

To what particular feature of the face should we attribute longevity? To the nostrils—for they *dilate*.

An old maid was once asked to subscribe for a newspaper. She answered, "No, I always make my own news."

A coquette may be compared to tinder, which lays out to catch *sparks*, but does not always succeed in lighting up a *match*.

"*What can we do for Italy?*" Louis Napoleon puts this question, and Punch makes this answer: "Take *your* leg out of the boot!"

Why is a man who gets knocked down at an election like the world we inhabit? Because he is "flattened at the polls."

What is the difference between a popular spring dish and a man with the ague? One is a baked shad and the other is shaked bad.

A Persian poet says: "Night comes on when the ink-bottle of heaven is overturned." Another calls the evening dew "the perspiration of the moon."

There is only one greater nuisance than a trombone player who performs "after tea," and that is a trombone player who performs "before breakfast."

An independent man is said to be one who can live without whiskey and tobacco, and shave himself with brown soap and cold water without a mirror.

A clergyman was censuring a young lady for tight-lacing. "Why," returned the miss, "you would certainly not recommend loose habits to your parishioners." The clergyman smiled.

Quill and Scissors.

A wild woman arrived in Cincinnati the other day. It is said she was caught in Arkansas by a gentleman who is now conducting her to Columbus, or some other suitable place, to be educated. She cannot talk, but utters sounds expressive of her feelings; she is tolerably good looking, and appears to be about twenty-five years of age.

Our Canadian neighbors are providing for the armament of their militia, with the very best weapons and the latest improved equipments. We notice the landing, from an English ship, of 129 cases of Minie rifles, carbines, swords and pistols, all expressly for the militia, of which a formidable force has recently been enrolled and officered.

The Vienna tribunal has condemned Dr. A. Goldmark to death, for high treason in 1848. Fortunately for the doctor, he is not in Austria, but in New York, where he is successfully carrying on a manufactory of percussion caps, and the sentence will have no more effect upon him than would "a blister upon a wooden leg."

Seekonk Common, situated on both sides of the Boston and Providence Railroad, and near the town house in Seekonk, comprising one hundred acres and upwards, was recently sold at auction for $5500. The proceeds are to be added to the school funds of Seekonk and Rehoboth.

Another libel suit has just been decided at New Orleans. A man wanted $20,000 damages from the Crescent newspaper, but the jury, after mature deliberation, gave him the round sum of one cent. Sueing newspapers for damages is not a paying business at New Orleans.

The emperor of Austria is said to speak with great facility the languages of the various nations which inhabit his empire. In a late audience he surprised many prelates by addressing them in the languages of their respective countries—Magyar, Italian, Sclavonic, etc.

At a singing rehearsal of five hundred children lately in Pittsburg, Pa., the seats rising nearly from floor to ceiling, gave way with a crash, precipitating the whole together; and although some fell at least twenty feet, providentially none were seriously injured.

Dr. King is now not only preaching without molestation on the Sabbath, but some of the most eminent men of Athens are among his regular hearers. He has also a theological class of a dozen Greek young men, who have the ministry in view.

Thomas McCaren, of Grafton, Mass., about 17 years of age, whose mother sent him either to Northbridge or Worcester, in December last, to get a tooth extracted, has not been heard of since, notwithstanding diligent inquiry has been made.

Ironistan and Barnum's other property at Bridgeport, are to be sold under the hammer early next September. The property will not probably bring more than $100,000 to $125,000, while the mortgages amount to $237,000.

In 1854 twenty-five millions of dollars were sunk in the ocean. In 1855, which was free of storms, the losses upon the ocean were fifteen millions of dollars, making an average of twenty million dollars for the two years.

Rufus Porter, of Washington, D. C., has invented a sonorific beacon to be erected on shoals or rocks, sending forth, by the action of the waves, loud and shrill whistles, as a warning to mariners in fogs, and a marine pump.

It is said that one hundred clergymen have, within a short period, seceded from the ministry and communion of the English Church, to join that of Rome—a fact unparalleled since the days of Cranmer.

The St. Louis Agricultural and Mechanical Association are preparing to have a great fair in that city this fall. A company has been formed for the purpose, and has already raised the sum of $50,000.

A National Convention of Cigar Makers has been called to meet in New York on Wednesday, July 2, for the purpose of harmonizing the various and conflicting interests of the trade.

A large piece of pure gold, worth $113, was picked up a few days since by a negro woman in a cornfield in Campbell county, Va., about nine miles below Lynchburg.

The Green Bay Advocate notices the arrival of 900 Belgians at that point this spring, and states that there are from 3000 to 4000 more on the way there.

George Wise, the last survivor of the pall-bearers, who officiated at the funeral of General Washington, is dead.

Reputation is like polished steel—it may be tarnished by a breath.

A new town at the head of Lake Superior has been christened Hiawatha.

Marriages.

In this city, by Rev. Mr. Robinson, Capt. H. Weeklaim to Miss Nancy Sullivan.

By Rev. Mr. Stockbridge, Rev. Joseph Banvard, of New York, to Mrs. Laura B. Severance.

By Rev. Mr. Barry, Mr. George W. Bowker to Miss Abby J. Lombard.

By Rev. Mr. Randall, Mr. Samuel Huse, Jr., of New York, to Miss Lucy D. Osborn.

By Rev. Mr. Cilley, Mr. Joseph Ricker to Miss Lovina J. Loud.

By David Leavitt, Esq., Mr. Matthew Haynes to Miss Anna M. Talbot.

At Charlestown, by Rev. Mr. Ellis, Mr Joshua W. Fernald, of Boston, to Miss Mary E. Simmons.

At Brighton, by Rev. Mr. Whitney, Mr. Henry H. Hunting to Miss Sarah Ann Pierce.

At Concord, Mr. Thomas H. Snow, of Boston, to Miss Mary A. Decker.

At Lynn, by Rev. Mr. Gear, Mr. Franklin Newhall to Miss H. F. Goldsmith.

At Natick, by Rev. Mr. Nason, Mr. James S. Gordon to Miss Elmer E. Gilchrist.

At Sherborn, by Rev. Mr. Downe, Mr. William A. Travis, of Holliston, to Miss S. Augusta Holbrook.

At Lowell, by Rev. Mr. Dadman, Mr. William Gipson to Miss Nancy M. Hunt.

At Newburyport, by Rev. Mr. Fiske, Mr. Charles Stewart to Miss Jane Hastings.

At Taunton, by Rev. Mr. Maltby, Mr. Robert Naylor to Mrs. Martha Mason.

At North Berwick, by Rev. Mr. Stevens, Mr. W. H. F. Davis to Miss Mary Hobbs; also, Mr. H. B. Kidder, of Alfred, Me., to Miss Mary Jane Davis, of North Shapleigh.

Deaths.

In this city, Mrs. Lucy A. Bates, wife of Joshua C. Bates, Esq., 38; Widow Margaret K. Ryder, 62; Mrs. A. Amanda Hilden, 29; Widow Elizabeth Jones, 55; Widow La Fayette Sendder, 74; Mrs. Rose Joner, 65; Mr. Edward Boucher Knight, 22; Mrs. Mary Thompson, 87.

At Roxbury, Mr. George W. Hewins, 32.

At West Roxbury, Mr. Jesse Kingsbury, 78.

At Charlestown, Mr. Amos Gale, 78.

At Chelsea, Mr. Freeman B. Paine, of Brewster, 20.

At Malden, Mr. James S. Lord, 36; Gen. William Cosey, of Amesbury, 62.

At Framingham, Widow Sarah K. Brown, 73.

At Salem, widow Ellen Lyons, 68; Widow Elizabeth Aaron, 82.

At Gloucester, Mrs. Sarah Warner, 64; Mr. Joshua Hiltier, 58.

At Newburyport, Miss Susan Webster, 74.

At South Danvers, Mr. Wm. W. Little, 76.

At Danversport, Capt. Benjamin Porter, 70.

At Northampton, Mr. Paul Strong, 76, a soldier of 1812.

At Lancaster, Mrs. Ruth Baldwin Heard, 74.

At Brookfield, Mrs. Sarah Wood, widow of the late Rev. Micah Stone, 86.

At Fairhaven, Mrs. Mercy B. Wood, 69.

At Worcester, Janet C. Woodard, 26.

At Greenfield, Mr. Joseph Pickett, 64.

At Southampton, Mr. Gamaliel Pomeroy, 76.

At Westport, Mr. John Gifford, 90.

At Easton, Widow Cynthia Britton, 84.

At Stockbridge, Rev. Noah Hendon, 66, formerly pastor of the Congregational Church in Lanesboro'.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LINES

Written to accompany a gift of Longfellow's Poems.

BY D. C. STURGIS.

Take thou these pages:—and if grief oppress
Thy heart,—or if thy soul be full of joy—
Or if to pensiveness thou flood incline,
Or if thou lookest with tear-blinded eyes
Upon the past,—or on the future gaze—
Their melody shall wait upon thy thoughts
With gentlest ministrations! Thou shalt find
Thy sorrow chastened into happy tears;
And joy shall like a lunar-rainbow crown
Thy brows with richer beauty. Pensiveness,
That like an autumn twilight flits thy heart
With shadowy enchantments, shall be turned
Into an angel presence, bearing peace!
As the spring calls up the buried flowers,
So shall these songs call up thy buried past,
Making its memory beautiful—like flowers!
Great thoughts are here, thoughts which give such a light
As that which kissed the pallid brow of Christ!
Music is here,—rich as the voice of God;
And if thou bringest an attentive ear,
Thou shalt hear revelations. Listen, then!
In music not the bride of prophecy!
The swift intelligence that waits on love
Delights in harmony. Poet and seer!
These are the wedded oracles of Heaven,
To whom the future lies in lucid light!

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE GOVERNESS.

BY MRS. MARY MAYNARD.

"SHALL I open the window and let in the sunshine, Miss Mary? You will die if you sit here moping and fretting in this dark room."

"No, thank you, Jane. I am coming down to receive a visitor presently, and I prefer this room as it is."

"But you don't know how it breaks my heart to see you so sorrowful. All the fretting in the world wont bring the master back, and yet you let the grief wear your life out."

"I shall soon be better, Jane; only don't tease me any more just now, for I have some papers to look over, and I cannot talk to you. You had better go down and tell the cook to prepare a luncheon for a gentleman who has had a long ride this morning."

"I wish you would eat something yourself, Miss Mary," grumbled Jane, as she left the room.

For a few moments Mary Stanford sat motionless, with her hands pressed tightly over her eyes, as if to shut out light, and thought, and the remembrance of her sorrow; and then she arose, and with a determined expression on her pale face, and in her sunken eyes, she approached a desk, unlocked it, and drew forth a large package of papers. She shuddered as she touched them; but the time had come when all finer feelings must be banished, and business—the cold, calculating business of the world—must be attended to.

We must now leave her, bending sadly over her task, and give her a fuller introduction to the reader.

Her father, Thomas Stanford, Esq, or Squire Stanford, as he was most familiarly and commonly called, was the only son of John Stanford, who had descended from a long line of Stanfords, all rich farmers, and dwelling in that beautiful county, commonly called "the garden of England." For three generations the heirs to the Stanford estate had been "only sons," and as each father in turn had left it to his child, enriched and improved by good management and care, it was not to be wondered at that on his death-bed John Stanford left his son a richer inheritance than had ever belonged to any one of their forefathers.

But alas! for the honor of the old name and the old family, Thomas Stanford proved himself unworthy of the trust committed to his charge; and scarcely was the body of his deceased parent consigned to the grave, ere he commenced a course of dissipation and extravagance that must have scattered the largest fortune in a few years. Twelve months after his father's death, he married a beautiful girl; but whose chief charm, in his eyes, was her fortune—a very handsome one, by the way—and when united with her beauty and amiable disposition, ought to have made him a happy man. But increased wealth gave increased motives for expenditure, and his poor, neglected wife soon had reason to repent her marriage with one who had captivated her fancy and not her judgment.

Their beautiful home was a rendezvous for all the wild, careless young reprobates in the neighborhood, who found it exactly suitable to their taste and their convenience to "drink Stanford's wines," to "ride Stanford's horses," "eat Stanford's good dinners," and to be waited upon by "Stanford's servants." And even the penniless younger sons of some of the neighboring nobility did not think it beneath their dignity to hunt, to gamble, to drink with "Squire Stanford,"—even sometimes to borrow an "odd fifty," well knowing that their careless host would never demand payment.

Poor Mrs. Stanford dragged out a miserable existence; outwardly surrounded with all life's comforts, inwardly pining for rest and quietness. Of four beautiful children, one only remained to bless her with its innocent love and fond caresses; and when, after thirteen years of misery, she was about to leave the scene of her wretchedness, the thought of this child and her uncertain fate, was all that could bring back her thoughts to earth.

She died, and for a time there was peace in the noisy mansion; and Stanford shunned his dissolute companions, and wore some outward appearance of regret; but when the first shock was over, he stifled the reproaches of conscience by plunging deeper than ever in those intoxicating pleasures that eventually proved his ruin. Gambling had become his favorite passion, and nothing but his skill and extraordinary success could possibly have enabled him to keep up the appearance he had always done, or surround himself with those luxuries that were necessary to his very existence. He had his little girl instructed by competent teachers, but kept her entirely secluded, rarely seeing her himself, and never allowing strangers to behold her if he could prevent it.

His affairs gradually grew from bad to worse. He was deeply involved in debt, and having always despised agriculture, and neglected his estate, he had no resources when once his money was spent. The estate itself was deeply mortgaged, and for several years, Thomas Stanford's life was a miserable struggle to keep up appearances and baffle creditors.

Meanwhile, his daughter was growing up to womanhood, and not all her seclusion or retirement could prevent the neighbors knowing that she, who should have been the heiress of the beautiful old estate, was both lovely and amiable, though dowerless and unprovided for; and deep was the sympathy felt for the motherless daughter. But Mary sought no one's society; absorbed in her cares and anxieties, she sighed not to mingle with those happier than herself, and was content to hide herself from the sight of inquisitive eyes, within the walls of her beloved home, occupied in devising plans for counteracting the destructive effects of her father's misguided course. But each end was most unexpectedly put to all her hopes and fears relative to her unfortunate parent. Thomas Stanford left a boon companion's house late one night, more than half intoxicated, and at noon, next day, was carried to his home a mutilated corpse!

Poor Mary! It was but the realization of her worst fear, and though stunned by the shock, it could scarcely be said to be unexpected by her. She shut herself up in silence and darkness, to indulge, undisturbed, her feelings of horror and grief for her parent's untimely end; but the imperious call of business summoned her from this solitude, and she at once found herself called on to superintend the arrangement of affairs, thrown by carelessness and neglect into almost inextricable confusion.

Thomas Stanford had made no will—at first, considered somewhat strange, but when his accounts were examined more closely, not to be wondered at. Dissipation and extravagance had left him nothing to bequeath, and as Mary turned over pile after pile of unreceipted bills, bonds and notes, the conviction came gradually upon her that she was utterly destitute. It needed but one more blow, and her cup of sorrow was full; and that blow was not long in coming.

Pale, harassed, and worn out with care and anxiety, she met her lawyer on the day the reader is first introduced to her. Even he, cold-hearted old man as he was, was touched with the sad and careworn look of his young client, and hastened over the unpleasant details of the late Squire's affairs as quickly as possible.

"And now, my dear young lady, I must hasten to the conclusion of my errand, and fulfil a promise I made to a friend of yours."

"A friend of mine, Mr. Thomson? I know very few people, and fewer friends."

"You know Sir Thomas Dashwood's son?"

"To my sorrow; but I trust he is not the *friend* you allude to?"

"It is, indeed; and though a person little used to love affairs, I am commissioned to make you an offer of his hand and heart."

"Is this an insult, Mr. Thomson?"

The young girl was very pale, and there was something in her tone that startled the old man.

"My dear lady, you must not be too hasty. Young Dashwood makes you an offer that half the girls in the county would jump at. It is disinterested, too; for I suppose you know in what position he stands in regard to this house and property, and all it contains?"

"What can Gregory Dashwood possibly have to do with my father's house?" And even while she spoke a conviction of the truth caused her to tremble and sink half fainting into the chair.

"For many years your late father had no claim on this property whatever, and at the present time Gregory Dashwood is the owner of every inch of land, every acre on the place, every article of furniture in the house, the pictures, the plate, and even your jewelry and ornaments."

For a few moments she sat gazing on her companion, as if stupified with the overwhelming intelligence he had communicated; then came the full sense of her position, and with it courage and strong resolution to meet her fate. Rising, calm and dignified, she bowed to the old lawyer.

"Our conference is ended, sir. Had I been aware of my true position, it would never have taken place."

"One word, Miss Stanford, before we part: What answer shall I take back to the young gentleman whose proposal I have laid before you?"

The angry color flushed the girl's fair face, and her dark eyes flashed, as resting her hand on the door, she turned to her companion:

"Tell him the daughter of the man he robbed and murdered despises him and his offer; that sooner than become his wife she would beg her bread from door to door, or be the willing slave of the hardest taskmaster; and tell him," and here she lowered her voice until it was a harsh whisper,—"tell him that with his ill-gotten gains he will receive the orphan's curse."

Five minutes after, Mary lay fainting and insensible on her chamber floor, but ere the sun rose on the morrow, the last of the Stanfords went forth from the old mansion a destitute and penniless orphan.

In a splendid chamber of Sir Thomas Dashwood's magnificent country house, were seated two persons in deep conversation—they were the heir and Lawyer Thomson. The young man was negligently dressed, but there was enough of studied carelessness in his attire, to display the foppish follower of fashion. The costly dressing-gown and richly embroidered slippers, the downy sofa cushions and the embroidered handkerchief, were in keeping with the well-known character of the man; wealthy, effeminate, with luxurious tastes and no principle, caring for no one's sacrifices so that his comforts were not abridged, for no one's feelings, so that his whims were not thwarted.

As the moment he is introduced to the reader, Gregory Dashwood was in a most ungovernable fit of passion; and even the old lawyer drew back in alarm at the fearful change that came over his companion on hearing the history of his unsuccessful interview with Mary.

"And that is the return for all my patience, for all my anxiety about that haughty beauty; but she shall learn that I am not to be thwarted so. Fool that I was not to have turned old Stanford out long ago, and then her father's authority would have compelled that proud girl to listen to me!"

Gregory Dashwood felt very irritable, and as a soother, he sprang up hastily from his seat, and opening a closet, poured out and drank off several glasses of wine.

"Help yourself, Thomson," he at last said, setting the rich stand and glasses on the table, and walking hastily up and down the room.

The exercise gave him resolution; for, with an exclamation that caused Mr. Thomson to spill the wine he was in the act of carrying to his lips, the young man stopped before him, saying:

"She shall be mine in spite of all her daring speeches and proud scorn! I swear she shall! and I will not rest until my oath is fulfilled."

"I should advise you to be satisfied with what you have got, and comfort yourself with the thought that, if she has scorned you, you have consigned her to poverty." And Lawyer Thomson held up his third glass of wine, and admired its bright sparkle as the light shone through it.

"What is all of old Stanford's property to me?" he asked, as he turned from a long gaze out of the window. "Look there," he added, drawing aside the curtains, and pointing with his white hand to the magnificent landscape beyond. "Think you the heir of yon broad acres cares aught for the paltry farm of the old spendthrift? You might know me better, Thomson. But I love that proud, pale girl, and at this moment would sacrifice half my inheritance could I make her mine."

"The greater fool you," said the old lawyer, angrily. "Why did you not strive to win her good will, instead of making her hate you, by leading her father to destruction? You have destroyed your own plans by your headstrong foolishness."

"It was your advice, and to you I am indebted for my good fortune," was the still more angry answer.

Lawyer Thomson went away highly displeased, while Gregory again flung himself on his velvet couch to deliberate on the most effectual method of getting the helpless orphan into his power.

Pity that so fine a face should become wrinkled and prematurely old by such wearying and perplexing thoughts; pity that such a bright intellect should become enfeebled and debased by the destroying influence of profligate habits; pity, ten thousand pities, that the glorious, the immortal soul, once innocent and pure, should become sullied, darkened, perhaps lost, through a blind and headlong pursuit of pleasure!

"I have heard of a governess to day, girls, that will suit us admirably," exclaimed Mrs. Bancroft Adams, as she entered her daughters' room on her return from paying some friendly visits.

"Who is she?" "Where did you find her?" exclaimed both the young ladies at once.

"My friend, Mrs. Lapointe, heard of her through some acquaintance of hers, in some out-of-the-way place down in Kent; and as she knew we wanted a governess, she let me know at once, and I have sent to secure her."

"Is she young?" asked both the daughters in a breath.

"I don't know, I am sure; some poor farmer's daughter, I believe; educated altogether beyond her station, and now obliged to get her own living."

"O, some great awkward country girl, I suppose," said Miss Sophia Adams, turning to her mirror, and finishing the arrangement of her numerous ringlets with much satisfaction.

"With such a healthy red face that it will be perfectly distressing to look at her," drawled Miss Almira Adams, gracefully falling back on her couch, and holding her salts in her hand for fear she should require them.

"Never mind, so as she has not got red *hair*," laughed Miss Sophia.

This was a very spiteful speech, for Miss Almira's great trouble in this world was the color and quality of her tresses.

"I hope she will have decent looking hands and feet; for if there is one thing I dislike worse than another, it is a coarse fat hand and a great clumsy shoe."

Now if Miss Almira's obstinate red locks gave her endless trouble and anxiety, not less did Sophia's provokingly plump fingers occasion an endless annoyance to their fair owner.

The former spent two-thirds of her pocket money in procuring the most celebrated preparations for the improvement of her hair; the latter almost ruined herself in the purchase of kid gloves and satin slippers. But alas! for their laudable endeavors, the ungrateful tresses of the one persisted in standing up rough all over her head, or hanging in ragged looking curls on either side of her face; and the equally obstinate hands of the other continued to burst through all restraint, and at last began to grow purple, as if with suppressed anger at such treatment. These unceasing annoyances had a very injurious effect upon the temper of the young ladies, and materially assisted time in robbing them of their youthful charms.

Mrs. Bancroft Adams was a widow, and having four daughters to dispose of, and not a very large fortune at her command, she very wisely disposed of her house in London, and took up her residence in a fashionable resort for aristocratic invalids, where the beauty of the scenery was only surpassed by the beneficial effects of the Springs; where there were delightful opportunities for fishing or flirtation, for following the hounds for a day, or securing an eligible partner for life.

Mrs. Bancroft Adams was a most admirable manager, and with her very moderate fortune she contrived to keep up a very extensive appearance, so much so that most persons believed the Misses Adams to be almost heiresses. But in spite of all the traps and snares laid to catch unwary partners, the young ladies were still single, and likely to remain so. Of course this only relates to the two already introduced to the reader, the remaining pair being yet confined to the school room, and not supposed to indulge in anticipations of partners and pin money.

Now Mrs. Bancroft Adams might have lived forever at this fashionable idling place, and been no nearer the accomplishment of her object than at first, but for one lucky circumstance—she had an aunt, and this aunt was wealthy, rheumatic and fanciful, and annually made her niece's house her home at the season when the Springs were the gayest. In addition to her wealth, her rheumatism and ill temper, this lady was the widow of Sir Richard Walbridge, and a sort of female guardian to the young heir of Walbridge Manor, who, though several years past his majority, still showed his uncle's widow the same attention, respect and obedience he had rendered her in his boyhood. And if there was one weak spot in old Lady Walbridge's heart, it was love and admiration for the handsome young man, who was into her even as a son.

As the young baronet always accompanied his aunt in her annual visit to the Springs, and spent the principal part of his time in Mrs. Bancroft Adams's pretty parlors, it was the means of bringing that enterprising lady under the notice of many who otherwise would have remained in blissful ignorance of her existence. When the party from the "Bancroft House" were seen on the beach, or enjoying the afternoon promenade in the "Avenue," all were delighted to claim acquaintance with the fortunate Mrs. Adams, as such an acquaintance was certain to lead to an introduction to Lady Walbridge, and from her to the handsome young Sir Richard, on whose arm the old lady always leaned.

At the time when this interesting family were introduced to my readers, they were busy in a thousand preparations for the expected arrival of their annual guests; hence the anxiety about a governess to take care of the two wild young hoydens in the nursery, who were Lady Walbridge's special aversion, and who repaid her dislike with interest whenever opportunity offered. Then the young ladies had quantities of mantua-making and millinery to attend to, in expectation of the approaching gaiety; and the great chamber had to be newly furnished throughout, as such changes pleased their visitor when abroad, however averse she was to making them in her own beautiful home.

Amid all this confusion, the arrival of the new governess was anxiously looked for and impatiently hurried. But alas for the disappointments we meet with in this world, scarcely had the stranger entered their doors ere the whole family would have given half they possessed to have found some reasonable excuse for hurrying her away again. The most hideous monster entering their home could not have caused more dismay in the hearts of the Misses Adams and their mama, than did the coming of that beautiful governess.

"She can't stay here, mama, that's certain," said Miss Sophia, as the three met in conclave soon after the stranger's arrival.

"But I have no time to look up another, and you know how Laura and Julia will act when Lady Walbridge comes; besides, there's such quantities of sewing to be done that I really do not think it best to send her away, setting aside offending Mrs. Lapointe, after she has taken so much trouble for me. O no, it will never do to let her go away; the only thing we can do is to keep her shut up in the nursery all the time they are here. You know Aunt Walbridge never goes there."

"O, she will be sure to go if we don't want her to," exclaimed Almira, crossly.

"I think mama's plan the best after all; so don't look so sulky about it, Mira, even if she is beautiful, and has magnificent hair."

"I'm sure she is not such a beauty as all that, even if she has white satin hands and a foot like an opera dancer," was Almira's cutting reply.

Poor Mary Stanford! her office was no sinecure in the establishment of Mrs. Adams; but, strange to say, from the two youngest she received the only comfort her situation produced. Completely fascinated by the beauty and winning manners of their new governess, Laura and Julia Adams yielded her obedience and respect, such as they had never before condescended to bestow on any one; and under her careful training and instruction, they no longer filled the house with noise and confusion, but studied and played as young ladies should.

Had it not been for her unfortunate good looks, Mrs. Adams could have found it in her heart to love the new governess, who had wrought so agreeable a change in her hopeful daughters; but it was out of the question to encourage so dangerous a rival to her older girls, consequently the lonely orphan was kept constantly employed in the children's room, and treated almost like a prisoner.

To one accustomed to freedom, such treatment would have been intolerable; but Mary Stanford had always been a recluse, and though she had a few recollections of stolen freedom, as will appear presently, yet on the whole confinement did not affect her very severely.

The intermediate time between her father's death and when we again meet her, had been passed at a quiet country parsonage, where her time had been fully employed in taking care of half a dozen little children, and nursing back to health their invalid mother. Having become necessary to the comfort of the family, she would probably never have left them, but for that "destiny" that Byron speaks of, that takes away our right or power to do always as we wish. This destiny came to Miss Stanford in the shape of the dissolute Gregory Dashwood, who having discovered her retreat, commenced a series of persecutions that eventually drove her away from her kind friends—a course of conduct that occasioned her much suffering at the time, but which afterwards proved to be the best thing that could have happened to her, and the very worst for the success of her enemy's plans.

True, all looked dark on her first arrival at "Bancroft House," but hope did not desert her even under her accumulated discomforts, and she still looked forward to a brighter day. The Misses Sophia and Almira would fain have gratified their ill nature and jealousy by openly displaying their dislike to the beautiful governess; but there was something in her manners, her voice, her dress, and her stately, reserved air, that forbade all freedom, and kept them well in check.

Their only satisfaction was in keeping her so busy that it was next to impossible to find time to attend to her own attire; but with all their connivances, the beautiful braids were still wound gracefully round the loveliest head in the world; the same black dress was still worn with the same matchless ease and elegance; and worse than all, the little white hands became even smaller and whiter the longer their mistress was a prisoner.

"I never did hear the equal of that girl's impudence," exclaimed Miss Almira, as she burst into the room where her mother and sister were very busy in putting up muslin drapery on an old-fashioned square bedstead.

"What is the matter now?" asked the mother, a little pettishly.

"Why, you know they are coming to morrow, and here is my blue dress not done; and that girl, with all the airs in the world, says that she has more to do now than she can do, without neglecting the children. And when I told her she must leave everything, she had the impertinence to say that she certainly should not undertake it." And quite out of breath and temper, Miss Almira sank into a chair and cried for vexation.

"Why don't you do it yourself, or wear another to morrow?" asked Sophia, highly amused at her sister's vexation.

"O, you know I like blue so well, and I left this to the last so as to get the prettiest pattern, and now that lazy thing wont help me to finish it. It is too bad!" And Miss Almira's tears streamed afresh at the annoying thought.

"There, don't be such a baby, for pity sake. Red hair is bad enough, but red eyes are dreadful." And Miss Sophia indulged in a hearty laugh, while her sister flounced out of the room in a towering passion.

The long talked of visitors came according to appointment, and were met by the mother and daughters with overwhelming kindness, and the most officious display of respect. Even Miss Almira was all smiles and blushes; for happily she had taken her sister's advice, and the much coveted blue dress adorned her little pinched figure.

After seeing his aunt safely installed in her new home, the young baronet took leave of her and proceeded to his boarding place, leaving the young ladies in ecstacies at the "great improvement in his looks," and "the elegant taste he always displays in his dress," "the rich tinge of brown on his cheek," and "the delightful set of his Paris coat."

"Yes, he looks very well," said Lady Walbridge, with a little laugh to herself. "Love agrees with him, I think."

"Love! Why, aunt, who is he in love with?" exclaimed all three ladies at once.

"O, I don't know much about it; but I suppose you will find it all out some time, girls; so give me my embroidery frame and my bag of silks, and don't talk any more about my nephew.—Have you got a governess to keep Jack and Tom in order?" she asked, after a few minutes' silence, during which the young ladies had been deliberating on the news they had just heard.

"O yes," said Mrs. Adams; "and they are so improved you would hardly know them."

"Bring them down," was the laconic reply.

And forthwith the young ladies with the masculine titles were brought down and presented to their relative, who laid down her work, took off her spectacles, and drawing them close to her, examined them very minutely with her little black eyes.

"Very much improved, I must say," was the first remark. "Who is your governess?" she added, turning to her niece.

"Only a poor country girl that a friend recommended to me," was Mrs. Bancroft Adams's answer, as she mentally framed some excuse for complying with the next request.

"I should like to see her, only I know she must be as ugly as sin, or you would not take her." And then she old lady laughed her little laugh.

"O no, indeed, ma'am, she is not ugly," said Julia, eagerly.

"She is very pretty indeed, ma'am," said Laura.

Lady Walbridge, evidently pleased at the change in their manners, asked them to sit down beside her and wind her silks, and tell her all about the new teacher.

Burns says our best laid plans are apt to become disarranged, and daily experience proves the truth of his assertion—at least, Miss Almira Adams would have willingly joined in the poet's opinion. It was vexatious, after all her trouble and pains, to find her deep laid schemes thus cruelly frustrated. In vain were all her studied charms, her well learned quotations, her blue dress and her bluer ribbons; there was not a hope left to cheer her that the young baronet might yet be hers; and the more she reflected on what Lady Walbridge had said, the more gloomy became her prospects.

It was well for all parties that the young lady did not know the exact state of the young gentleman's love affairs; but of that, we shall give more hereafter.

With the true spirit of a philosopher, after her first ebullition of disappointment, Miss Almira consoled herself that "nobody knew of that disappointment; and if she could not catch Sir Richard, there were other young baronets equally rich, if not equally handsome." And so she put on a brighter blue dress and adorned her "rosy locks" with wreaths of "forget-me-nots," and seated herself in the drawing-room with her vinaigrette and the last "Lady's Own."

For several days after her arrival, Lady Walbridge made anxious inquiries about the "governess," but finding that she was to be invisible, she very quietly walked up to the school room one morning, and surprised Mary in the midst of writing books, slates, grammars, samplers, dictionaries, etc., not to mention half a dozen cambric handkerchiefs she had asked Sophia to hem for her on the previous day, and which she very unceremoniously told the young stranger to put down.

"If you are going to sew for me, do something that will help me. I have just commenced a slipper for my nephew, and you may take the mate if you will. I suppose you can embroider?" she asked, looking with much complacency on the fair young face that flushed and paled under her searching glance.

Mrs. Bancroft Adams's exclamation was a strange mingling of horror and astonishment, as two hours afterwards she opened the school-room door and beheld her titled relative in close conversation with the dreaded governess; each busily employed on the dainty, fancy work in her hand, while the little girls were attentively studying their tasks. Remonstrance was useless; so she could only shut the door, and walk tragically into her daughters' room, and inform them of their defeat.

"Just as I said," exclaimed Almira.

"Did you ever know such a provoking old thing!" echoed Miss Sophia. "The next thing she will have her down in the parlor to play for her."

Faithful prophet! That very evening the old lady desired that Miss Stanford might be summoned to the drawing-room, and for two hours the beautiful girl sat at the instrument playing piece after piece to gratify her new friend. One drop of sweet alone remained in the cup of the baffled schemers—not a visitor came in during the evening, and Sir Richard was otherwise engaged, and could not come to call on his relative.

The next morning Lady Walbridge expressed it as her opinion that the children and their governess ought to go out into the air more than they were in the habit of doing; and as there was no time like the present, they had better go at once.

"Poor sickly-looking things! shut up in a nursery forever; and that pale girl, too! They must not stop in another hour." And in her excitement about it, the old lady made a mistake in her pattern.

Mrs. Adams made so many excuses that at last the children were compelled to remain at home; but Miss Stanford "must go;" so poor Mary mechanically put on her bonnet and mantle, and obeyed the command.

A great change had come over the governess since the arrival of the new guest at Bancroft House. The children hardly understood her, so strangely did she look and talk at times; and then the blunders she made in their lessons, the mistakes in her sewing; it was unaccountable. And there was as puzzling things happened that the little sharp eyes did not spy out: the trembling of the little hands that held the velvet slipper; the sudden start and quick throb of the heart at the sound of a strange voice; the tears and sobs that were smothered in the pillow, lest watchful ears should hear; the sigh of mental anguish, and the convulsive clasping of the thin, white hands.

Slowly and unheedingly Mary Stanford wandered along a quiet, shady path that led to the grounds of a neighboring gentleman; and as she walked, tears, bitter tears, rolled down her cheek and fell on her gloved hand. It was a bright sunny morning—the prelude to a very warm day; but the flowers bloomed brightly by the wayside, and all nature looked fresh and beautiful after the pleasant showers on the previous evening. The young girl alone looked sad as she slowly pursued her way, musing on the thousand disagreeables that she was called on daily to encounter.

She had been out nearly half an hour, and was in the act of turning to retrace her steps, when she suddenly encountered the hated figure of Gregory Dashwood standing directly in her path. For an instant she was paralyzed with terror and surprise, and then summoning courage, attempted to walk fast, but was instantly prevented by his catching her hand forcibly in his.

"You shall not escape me this time!" he exclaimed, savagely. "I have had too long a search to lose sight of you again; so keep quiet and listen to what I have to tell you."

Useless command to tell her to "keep quiet"—she could not have spoken then if her life depended on the utterance of a word.

"I have sworn you shall be my wife, Mary Stanford—sworn it when I loved you! I have you now; but I will yet keep my oath to punish your obstinacy. Do you hear me?" he shouted, enraged at her silence and deathly look. "Do you hear me, I say?—you *shall* be my wife!"

He wrung the hand he held with such an agonizing pressure that the spell that held her was broken, and she screamed aloud with almost maniacal violence.

Again and again that fearful sound rung through the hills and woods around, but ere the last echo died in the distance, a third actor appeared on the spot. Three hasty steps brought him to where they stood, and it needed but one glance at Mary's face to make him catch her in his arms, to tear her from the clasp of her insulter, and to strike him to the earth.

"Mary! my Mary!—found at last!" was the rejoicing, thankful exclamation of the stranger, as he gazed on the pale features resting on his bosom.

"Quite a romance, I declare," said Mrs. Bancroft Adams, as the whole party were gathered in her parlor that fine summer's morning; "but I should like to know where you first became acquainted?"

"Our first meeting was a very sad one. Miss Stanford was at her mother's grave, almost the only place she visited outside of her father's house." And the young baronet tried to compose the joyous expression of his countenance into more solemnity, and failed.

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"You shall not escape me this time!" he exclaimed, savagely. "I have had too long a search to lose sight of you again; so keep quiet and listen to what I have to tell you."

Useless command to tell her to "keep quiet!"—she could not have spoken then if her life depended on the utterance of a word.

"I have sworn you shall be my wife, Mary Stanford—sworn it when I loved you! I hate you now; but I will yet keep my oath to punish your obstinacy. Do you hear me?" he shouted, enraged at her silence and deathly look. "Do you hear me, I say?—you *shall* be my wife!"

He wrung the hand he held with such an agonizing pressure that the spell that held her was broken, and she screamed aloud with almost maniacal violence.

Again and again that fearful sound rung through the hills and woods around, but ere the last echo died in the distance, a third actor appeared on the spot. Three hasty steps brought him to where they stood, and it needed but one glance at Mary's face to make him catch her in his arms, to tear her from the clasp of her insulter, and to strike him to the earth.

"Mary! my Mary!—found at last!" was the rejoicing, thankful exclamation of the stranger, as he gazed on the pale features resting on his bosom.

"Quite a romance, I declare," said Mrs. Bancroft Adams, as the whole party were gathered in her parlor that fine summer's morning; "but I should like to know where you first became acquainted?"

"Our first meeting was a very sad one. Miss Stanford was as her mother's grave, almost the only place she visited outside of her father's house." And the young baronet tried to compose the joyous expression of his countenance into more solemnity, and failed.

"Was Miss Stanford the lady you meant, aunt, when you said Sir Richard was in love?" asked Almira, who could not yet believe the new state of things was possible.

"I did not say he was in love positively, and certainly I did not allude to Miss Stanford, not being aware they had ever met before to-day."

That evening Mary walked with her lover in the little garden of Bancroft House, and all the mysteries of their separation were talked over and explained.

"I have searched untiringly for you, and had almost given up the hope of ever finding you; but it appears that your enemy had better success—there, don't tremble," he continued, as Mary clung closer to his arm. "You are mine now, and the blessed privilege to protect you is mine, also."

Mary Stanford remained at Bancroft House until Lady Walbridge departed for her own beautiful home, and then the fair orphan accompanied her as the betrothed wife of Sir Richard.

It was a new and delightful life she now entered upon, worth living seventeen unhappy years to enjoy. The perfect elegance and repose that surrounded her in her kind friend's home suited the calm, peaceful tastes she had imbibed in her unhappy childhood. The watchful, tender care of the good old lady was grateful to the heart pining for a mother's love; and the devotion of her lover filled up the measure of her happiness.

We will not enter into the particulars of the wedding, which was celebrated at Lady Walbridge's house, and in a style of splendor suitable to the rank and wealth of the bridegroom. The bride was magnificently dressed, and looked "angelic," as an enthusiastic young lady was heard to remark. It is as well to mention that this young lady was accompanied by *her* lover, and consequently had no cause to find fault with the bright prospects of our heroine. Some others were not so well pleased, and not a few were known to have said that "Miss Stanford was altogether beneath Sir Richard," and that "it was a very unsuitable match," and that "it was just like one of old Lady Walbridge's notions," and many other kind comments, not one of which ever occasioned the principal parties concerned a serious thought. Nor was there much disappointment manifested when Mrs. Bancroft Adams begged to be excused from attending the ceremony, her whole household being plunged in the depths of the most delightful confusion in preparing for Miss Almira's marriage with "Gregory Dashwood, only son of Sir Thomas Dashwood," the good lady wrote to her astonished relatives.

Mary shuddered, and felt half inclined to acquaint poor Almira with her lover's real character; but Lady Walbridge would not allow of any such interference.

"All the girl wants is to get married; she has no heart to break, and I can imagine no severer punishment for him than to be tied to such a wife. Of course he thinks she has money, and that disappointment will not add much to his happiness."

Mary could have found it in her heart to have pitied them both; but she knew her kind intentions would be suspected, and prudently allowed things to take their own course.

Our story is almost finished. Sir Richard never ceased to rejoice over the happy chain of circumstances that had blessed him with so good and beautiful a wife. Mary was happy in her married life; so happy that the sad events of her childhood and youth seemed like some forgotten dream in the blissful reality of the present. For fear our readers should doubt this, we will give them one more scene in the life of our heroine.

It was a smiling June morning; the blue sky looked bluer than common, the flowers smelt sweeter, the birds sang more cheerily—at least, so thought the beautiful young mistress of Walbridge Manor, as she slowly wandered through her magnificent gardens, watching the childish antics of a merry, golden-haired little fellow, who walked steadily by her side one moment, the next was wildly chasing the little birds that fluttered among the flowers. But hark! The mother hears advancing steps; and calling the little one by her side, they hurry through the gate and across the lawn to meet "papa," who advances with his bridle carelessly hung on his arm, and his pet, "White Star," beside him. With screams of delight, the little fellow strove to free himself from the detaining clasp and rush into his father's arms, which he at last succeeded in doing.

"What beautiful flowers, Richard! Where did you procure them?"

"They are quite a new species, I believe," laughed the young husband, as he placed some of the drooping crimson buds in his wife's beautiful hair. "I heard of them yesterday, and rode over to the 'Cypress Hollow' this morning to find them for you. You ought always to wear flowers in your hair, May, they become you so well."

"Thanks—first for the kindness and then for the compliment."

Lady Walbridge looked more lovely than ever as she blushed beneath her husband's admiring gaze.

"And now my boy must have a ride." The father placed his little son carefully on the saddle, and the whole party re-crossed the lawn, while their merry laughter sounded pleasantly on the air, long after they were hidden from sight.

Reader, my heroine had been married five years.

"HOBSON'S CHOICE."

The expression, "Hobson's Choice," is proverbial both in Europe and America. The story of its origin is thus stated: Thomas Hobson was a celebrated carrier in Cambridge, Eng., who to his employment in that capacity added the profession of supplying the students at the university with horses. In doing this, he made it an unalterable rule that every horse should have an equal portion of time in which to rest as well as labor. Hence, he always refused to let a horse out of his turn, however desirous the applicant might be of choosing for himself. Hence the saying, "Hobson's Choice, *this or none.*"

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE SNOW-SCENE:

A Crayon, portrayed the author by its artist, Mrs. A. E. Davis.

BY MRS. L. E. GOODWIN.

White and soft—white and soft
As the robe of an empire's new-born heir,
Lieth the snow, slow, aloft—
Gleaming full in the moonlight fair.

Yesterem when the cottage fire
Shone slate through the casement small,
As from an eye some fond desire,
Clouds uprose with the first snow fall.

Charily dropped the flakes awhile,
A doubtful touch on the canvass dim;
Then bold the strokes; the picture's smile
Dimpling spread from rim to rim.

Winds were still, nor the syphilde fleet
Drifted astray on the ether sea;
Mocked not the shivering lambkin's bleat;
The ploughman's toil o'er the dreary lea;

Piped not in the creviced walls;
Nor either robbed of shining alms—
Bounteous stream from heavenly halls—
The wayside fir-grove's contoricted palms.

Now is the curtain drawn aside,
That the friendly moon and stars may glance;
Alone some delicate fringes bide,
In soft relief to the blue expanse.

Soon in the east will rosebuds ope;
Poppies black drop leaf in the west;
The sunlight glow of the virgin slope
Rise like foam for the breaker's crest.

Wesesme birds of the wood that lack,
Will in faeries flocks to the threshold go;
Twittering, gather crumbs from the track
Of childhood's feet in the dainty snow.

Wilder, wintrier storms may rave,
While the pioneer's cot to view shall be
The prison chest Acrisius gave
In relish dread to the angered sea.

Yet within, through eves grown long,
Shall be sights and sounds of blameless mirth;
Fayest, child—the book, the song,
The crack of nuts on the bright, stone hearth.

And anon, as an answer soft
Turneth wrath from his wrath away,
Shall be seen the dark and silent croft,
Changed by the light of a sweet, spring day.

Earth her casket lid will lift,
And the rich array of its emeralds wear;
And all her blessings, all her thrift,
With her patient pilgrims freely share.

When the birchen tree no more
Ghostly, stark, by the field-gate shows,
But stretches shade to the cabin door,
Ajar at the sultry daylight's close—

Let the artist hand that traced
The eloquent winter scene come near.
So a contrast page as this be graced—
A fairy's wand and a giant's spear.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

SERPENT CHARMERS OF EGYPT.

BY DR. J. V. C. SMITH.

Those who have travelled in Egypt have generally had opportunities for witnessing the extraordinary influence which certain Arabs have over the serpents of that country. But it is a hazardous undertaking to relate what is actually exhibited in the valley of the Nile, on account of the difficulty of having it believed.

People are apt to disbelieve any and every account which finds no parallel in their experience. Hence, in relating the truth in regard to the magnitude of three stones laid up in the western wall of the great temple of the sun, at Baalbec, several accurate travellers lost their reputation.

No one could credit it, that single hammered blocks, sixty feet, sixty-two, and a third sixty-eight feet long, by twelve in width, were ever quarried by human hands, and if they had been, it was not possible to have elevated them to the positions they were represented to occupy.

One oriental explorer, it is said, actually omitted to mention the colossal stones of the temple at all, to save the work he had written from being condemned as absolutely false, which was the fate of his successor, on the same ground.

But since the facilities for visiting remote regions of the old world have rendered ancient ruins of the East comparatively easy of access, thousands of Europeans and Americans have surveyed the vast edifice of Baalbec, on the magnificent plain of Cœle-Syria, and bear witness to all that led to the condemnation of early travellers, because they simply published what was positively true; yet, because their readers had not seen with their own eyes, they had the effrontery to maintain their stories were Munchausen narratives.

So of the Psylli, or snake charmers of Egypt. From the earliest periods of written history, the feats of these men have been recorded, down to the present year; and whatever is related, if it deviates from the common experience in the town or country in which the relation is examined, the reader invariably condemns it as not only untrue, but outrageously so. In other words, a fact becomes a great lie.

Herodotus was familiar with the marvellous power of a particular class, under the name of Psylli, who could handle venomous reptiles with impunity. From his time to the present, the secret has been handed down from generation to generation, and bids fair to be transmitted to a remote future.

Those most expert in snake-charming, were Libyans. But instead of being confined to the Libyan desert, they are now to be found on both sides of the Nile.

An interesting memorial of the skill of the Egyptian Psylli may be found in the 7th chapter of Exodus, 10th verse:

"When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, show a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, take thy rod and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent. And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and did so, as the Lord had commanded; and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents; but Aaron's rod swallowed them up."

This, therefore, is eminent authority to show the attainments of the Psylli as long ago as when preparations were making for the escape of the Jews from their hard bondage in that ancient seat of early civilization. Tradition actually refers to a miserable Arab town on the Libyan bank of the Nile, in Upper Egypt, where Pharaoh procured the snake charmers to confront Moses.

That serpents possess the innate faculty of inducing animals to come directly within their grasp, requires no corroboration. Birds, rabbits, etc., are destroyed by them, and were it not for the power which has taken the name of charming, it would be literally impossible for a creeping reptile to seize prey that could outfly or outrun them, on the slightest alarm.

But when the fact is viewed in another light, that certain half-civilized Arabs and African negroes can use serpents precisely as they manage their destined prey, it creates a feeling of astonishment.

By invitation, the writer dined on a certain occasion with a medical gentleman whose house was without the wall of Cairo, and located in a large garden, in which were the plants, shrubbery, etc, peculiar to that section of the country. He mentioned as something of a temporary drawback to the pleasure otherwise to be derived from the garden, that two large serpents had taken up their residence in it, and he should be obliged to call in a snake charmer to dislodge them.

He was asked particularly if he had confidence in them. He said their power was unquestionable, and admitted of no doubt whatever. Through him, various facts illustrative of the habits of some varieties of serpents were obtained. It is not uncommon to come suddenly upon a huge snake coiled up under some article of bed-clothing, or lying on a mattress. How they got into the house so stealthily, is often a wonder to the inmates.

Sometimes a wound from their fangs follows a sudden surprisal; but if not irritated, on perceiving themselves unwelcome guests, they slide away into some opening in the walls or floor, if not instantly killed, to reappear again under similar circumstances.

The same gentleman informed me, that a few weeks before this conversation, a professed snake charmer was bitten by one of his own serpents, which he was exhibiting, which is one of the most common exhibitions in the Nilotic cities; and although the fellow was excessively alarmed, which prompted him to have medical aid almost instantly, so rapidly was the venom taken over the system, he died very soon in spite of all the remedies prescribed.

A common variety used by the Psylli, are speckled adders, from a yard to nearly four feet in length. Some are very slender, not much larger than ordinary whip lashes, from one foot to two feet long. Then there are larger, clamped snakes, somewhat resembling the rattle snake. And they were all represented to be poisonous, which I was quite willing to take for granted, for nothing would make one's hair stand on end quicker than seeing one of them snap his jaws, hiss, and thrust out a long forked tongue, which moved like a flash of light.

Large serpents they averred could be commanded just as well as small ones, but they were too heavy to carry about. With small ones they could present a greater variety of astounding feats. Snake charmers carry their pets about in baskets with a hinge cover. When one is wanted, they set down the basket, run one hand in among the squirming contents, and feel out the particular one they wish.

A portly Arab of about fifty years of age performed as many horrible manœuvres, as my nerves could bear at one sitting. His son, a small boy of about ten years, could handle the imprisoned snakes with the same impunity as the father.

"I've learned him how to do it," was his observation, when translated into English. The masses of Egypt look on with all the distrust, fear and hatred that travellers do, when the Psylli are handling their snakes; and they invariably concur with the declarations of English, French and Italians, who reside in Egypt, that the art is confined to a distinct set of Arabs. Whether they are all of one family stock, branching off into uncles, first, second and third cousins, is more than I could ascertain. In the instance under consideration, the father assured me that he taught his son.

This, therefore, pre supposes a certain definite kind of information, which is communicated from one to another. But the mystery puts freemasonry almost in the back ground, in reference to the antiquity of the art, and the profound secrecy with which it has been kept for four thousand years.

This same Arab laid a serpent about a yard in length on the deck of the boat: stroking out its rigidities or semi-coils, till it was straight as a walking stick. When that was accomplished, he turned round to me and renewed the conversation. On withdrawing his attention, the snake raised its head some six inches, the forked tongue darted out, and its eyes glistened like two diamonds, which induced me to step a little further off. At this, Mr. Arab turned his head round to the snake, and shaking his finger, and muttering some strange words, the reptile dropped his head flat down to the plank again, as it was before. This was repeated, and might have been a part of the play, though it seemed to be quite incidental.

Again, he took half a dozen or more snakes—handed to him by the little boy, who ran his hand down under the lid and took them out—which were of unequal length, and held them in one hand by the middle. They were heads and tails, and in an instant, their twistifications, hisses, and efforts to escape, were more terrific than the heads of the Gorgon sisters.

Next, with the other hand they were stroked out parallel to each other, like threads in a skein. Being soon quiescent, as though bereft of volition, he put them round a man's neck in a single knot, as a handkerchief is often tied. Instantly, on letting go, they were roused to intense activity, and the reverend gentleman who had the surprise visitation of a coil of writhing venomous serpents round his neck, for such was the quickness of the Arab's movements he had tied the knot before there was time to suspect a trick of the sort, begged, as did myself, to have him take them away. That same gentleman is a resident of Cambridge, and no doubt has a vivid recollection of the circumstance.

A very disgusting, and it seemed to me, a dangerous trial of his skill was putting the head of one of his serpents into his own mouth, and forcing it in coil after coil, while the repule evidently was resisting with all its force. Both cheeks were enormously distended, the tail protruded beyond the lips, and then, taking it by the extreme tip, the whole was slowly withdrawn.

The Arab proposed that I should accompany him the next day, out into the margin of the Desert of Arabia, in the neighborhood of Karnak, where he proposed to convince me that no preparatory education of the serpents was necessary, in order to bring them into control.

"I will make a noise and they will come to me from all directions, and I can make them mind as these do."

But expressing my satisfaction with his ability in the line of his profession, thus far, I chose not to take my chance in the midst of a congregation of unknown serpents, which would come at his bidding.

Several mysterious feats of legerdemain, in which serpents form an essential part, are daily practised in the streets of Cairo, that put at defiance the best specimens of jugglery witnessed here or in Europe, and rendered the more puzzling because they are executed in broad day on the bare ground.

It is not worth while to discuss the question, how the Psylli are able to accomplish these singular, and certainly very dangerous exploits. They certainly do it, and no other persons have succeeded in the attempt.

A favorite opinion is abroad, that the tubular fangs through which the poison flows from the sacs in which it is secreted, into the puncture, have been extracted. The fangs are not taken out; it is the boast of the exhibitor that they remain intact, and they roll back the lips to show them. Again, the case of the Arab who died of a bite, already referred to, shows that some precaution had been omitted, which led to the melancholy death of the poor fellow.

That no kind of drugging is necessary, or undertaken, is based on the declaration of the Karnak Arab, who wished an opportunity of demonstrating the fact, by taking me with him to the Desert, to prove what he had asserted. No researches of naturalists have yet detected the method of controlling the natural propensities of these universally dreaded reptiles.

Residents of the highest qualifications for conducting philosophical inquiries, have left Egypt no wiser than when they entered it, on this track; and we are compelled to acknowledge from personal observation, the Psylli are in possession of an art, or a specific branch of science, of great antiquity, which modern science with all its appliances has not been able to explain.

In connection with these prelections, it might be interesting to have some illustrations of the well known fact in Africa, that the lion, if not some of the large ferocious animals, even perhaps, down to hyenas, exercise an influence over their intended prey, by their eyes, very similar to that exerted by serpents. But it might come with more propriety from some one who could furnish more illustrative facts than are at the command of the writer of these reminiscences of the land of the Pharaohs.

A SOLDIER STORY.

During the late Mexican war, the veteran General Riley, since deceased, was ordered to lead the storming party at Cerro Gordo. During the war of 1812-15, Gen. Riley had been shot in the throat, and consequently had a peculiarly strange intonation. He was ordered to storm one of the batteries of Cerro Gordo, and when his command was mustered, was thus addressed by his second in command:

"General, I do not think we can take this work."

"Think! You are not paid for thinking."

"But sir," said Col. B, "we can't take it."

"Can't take it—you have got to take it."

The old general put his hand to his belt, and pulling out a paper, said: "Here, thir, tis General Scott's order in black and white to take the infernal thing."

And they did take it.—*N. Y. Sun.*

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[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE WANDERER.

BY CHARLES H. LAMSON.

I have travelled long and wearily,
Have moved with weakening pain,
While woes that press me heavily,
And I long for my home again;
I long for the smile of love
Which waits for me at home,
And I pray to Him who rules above,
To guide me while I roam.

I've gazed on sunny isles,
In the genial, southern seas:
I've felt the power of witching smiles
From maids who smile to please;
I've gathered rich, ripe fruits,
And gorgeous, fragrant flowers,
And wildly followed gay pursuits,
To while my pain fraught hours.

But I long for the foaming brooks
Of my rocky, northern land;
Not sunny smiles, nor witching looks,
Nor palaces so grand,
Shall banish from my memory
The spot where once I played—
Where birds in heavenly euphony
Sang anthems while I prayed.

When I was young, a sinless child,
Nor aught had learned of vice,
But gently prayed, all pure and mild,
For the pearl of greatest price;—
I'll ever cherish that dear spot,
Where I was blest and pure,
Where sin had caused my soul no blot,
Nor woe could long endure.

But now I roam o'er glittering seas,
And hills and green-robed isles,
And fan my brow with southern breeze,
Or bask in sunny smiles;
Yet unto me a still small voice
Bids me remember home,
Remember loved ones would rejoice,
When I had ceased to roam.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE FAVORITE DAUGHTER.

BY CARRIE A. EMERSON.

"Come away from that window, my love," said Mrs. Arlingham to her daughter, a little child of four or five years old, as she was balancing herself on the window-sill, at the imminent danger of falling out on the pavement below.

The child did not obey; and placing herself in an attitude of even greater peril than before, she continued to excite her mother's fears in a way that denoted nothing less than a wilful and obstinate spirit.

Mrs. Arlingham descended to entreaties. "Do, my love, come away with mother; Jane has been making candy in the kitchen. Come, Bessie, be a darling, and come away from the naughty window."

The "naughty window" still held the "darling" unmoved, at the mother's distress; and it was not until Jane was called up, with a tray of the "linked sweetness long drawn out," that Bessie condescended to make terms with her mother, at the cost of making herself sick. In a few hours she was so ill that the physician was sent for, and nauseous drugs succeeded the sweet morsels which she had so eagerly devoured.

Mr. and Mrs. Arlingham were almost distracted. It was their youngest child, born after their other daughter had attained her thirteenth year. They had both done their best to spoil Bessie; and indeed the friends of the family, and the servants also, were not slow in helping them in this laudable undertaking. Flattery, fine clothes and sweetmeats were administered alternately, as she demanded them. Her mother spared no pains nor expense in robing the little figure which, under her load of finery, looked really ridiculous. One could hardly help laughing to see the airs which she put on, when dressed out for exhibition. While the elder sister, Lucy, was clad in plain, comfortable, sometimes even homely garments, even when grown a young lady, the little one sported laces and jewelry with an air which would have credited a finished coquette.

At ten years old, she was not less unmanageable than at four. Her will was law in the household, and the mother submitted, and required every one else to submit to her caprices. The father, now that the novelty of her infant powers had ceased to influence him—had begun to question whether they had done wisely; but even he did not dare at present to make any change in the ruling dynasty.

At fifteen, Bessie was in person charming, almost beyond description. Nothing could exceed the beauty of her complexion, the brilliancy of her eyes, nor the elegance of her figure; and yet she was but a spoiled beauty, after all. Mrs. Arlingham coveted for her daughter, even at that age, a prospect of marriage which should eclipse those of all her companions; and had even fixed upon the youth who should have the happiness of being her son-in-law. This was the only son of the wealthy Colonel Bryan, whose education was now being completed in Paris, and who was expected home early in the spring.

Lucy Arlingham was now twenty-eight years of age. Simple and unassuming in her manners, self-denying and self-sacrificing, trained from her thirteenth year to give place in everything to Bessie, and to make all things subservient to the "darling's" whims, Lucy had little time to cultivate her heart and affections in any other way. She had contrived, notwithstanding the scanty schooling which she had received, to pick up a very respectable stock of practical knowledge. Her constant care over Bessie had developed the finer qualities of her nature, by exercising her patience and self-control. Her industry had been brought into active exercise by the repeated calls upon her time in fashioning and perfecting Bessie's wardrobe, for even Mr. Arlingham's well-filled purse could not answer all the demands for that purpose, unless something was effected by home industry; and the wilful girl would not tax her own powers, but called on Lucy to exercise her taste and skill at all times for her adornment. And so Lucy's youth had gone by, and with so little of the usual stimulus belonging to that golden season, that she had absolutely touched the "outer circle of old maidism," as Bessie mockingly told her.

But down deep in Lucy Arlingham's heart, unknown to all, and almost unconsciously to herself, she cherished a tender remembrance of an evening, over which ten years had swept their shadows without effacing it. Ten years is a long, long time for love to exist without something on which to feed. Even woman's devotion would sometimes fail, if put to such a test; and Lucy might have been pardoned, if she had lost her trust in man's love.

Ten years before, when she was only eighteen, Leonard Ashley had met her at one of the very few parties which she was allowed to attend. It was a children's ball, at which Bessie made one of the greatest attractions, in a dress of elaborate workmanship which cost Lucy many a headache in embroidering. Lucy herself had decked the little five-year old fairy, and then had just time left to smooth her dark brown locks and put on a simple white muslin dress, without even a brooch or a flower in her hair; and had the privilege of standing nearly the whole evening, to see her well-dressed associates taken out, set after set, to dance, without seeming to bestow a thought upon her.

It was near the close of the gay scene, and the children were preparing to go home and yield up the hall entirely to the grown up people, when Lucy felt her arm gently touched, and a voice whispered in her ear:

"Ask your father to let you remain longer. Tell him I will see you home quite early."

She turned to see the playmate of her infancy, young Ashley, who had just returned from a long voyage. He had just entered the ball-room, and was delighted to see his old playmate looking as serene and good tempered, as, when a child, they had sailed tiny ships in the same stream together.

"Come, come, hurry up, Lucy," said her father; while her mother cried out: "How inconsiderate, Lucy. Bessie will certainly take cold if you keep her waiting here, after dancing."

Lucy had not danced yet—so *she* was in no danger; but as she stepped up to her father and preferred her request, Mrs. Arlingham began to deny it for him.

"What nonsense is this?" she said. "You will be wanted at home to see to Bessie, she is so excited, poor thing."

"Now, Sophia," said her husband, "I shall insist, to-night, on Lucy's staying. She has had no dancing, no pleasure to-night, and Leonard Ashley is the son of an old friend and—yes, Lucy, go back into the drawing-room; he is waiting for you now."

Lucy thanked her father with such a grateful, happy look, that he inwardly resolved that her opportunities for pleasure should be increased hereafter; nor did he repent indulging her now, even though his ears were pained by his wife's loudly expressed disapprobation during the ride home.

"No one but Lucy can manage Bessie when she is tired," she said, "and I really think you ought to have taken her home."

"Wife," said Mr. Arlingham, "did it ever occur to you that we are gratifying Bessie's temper at the expense of Lucy's health and peace?"

"I cannot say that it ever did."

"Well, then, it is high time that the matter was brought up for your consideration. *I* begin to see it, and I am sorry to see it too."

A few such conversations as this irritated Mrs. Arlingham considerably; but before even this one had ended, Lucy's heart was beating time to a happier measure than that which the ball-room music was bringing out. She heard Leonard Ashley's whispered sentences, in the dance, and the bright color came to her cheek and the light to her eye as she listened; and when at length the party broke up, and he left her at her father's door, he exacted a promise from her that she would not be married until he should return from the voyage on which he was immediately to sail. It was all that he said. He bound himself by no promise, although Lucy did not perceive that she alone was pledged. She gave the promise, and when she parted from him, she truly felt that she was his, and that he also was hers. She did not realize the distinction between the two. It was the old story of woman's unsuspecting, unselfish trust. With her, it was a matter of unquestioning doubt; and she gave up her whole heart to the new and delicious feeling of security in another's love.

She did not see him again; but when she knew from the papers that he had sailed, she did not require his presence—for her promise, and his implied love, sat lightly at her hitherto unsought heart, and she moved round like one who had received a new revelation of life. Her father secretly wondered why Lucy's step was so much lighter and her cheek and eyes so much more brilliant, when Bessie's demands upon her became every day more frequent. Her mother, absorbed in the petty details of Bessie's frivolous life, took no notice.

"Is Lucy always going to play second fiddle to that child?" said Mr. Arlingham, bluntly and somewhat roughly, one day when Bessie had taxed her sister to the utmost of her strength and energies.

"How coarse you are, Mr. Arlingham," said his wife. "You do not expect that Lucy, at her time of life, should be petted as we pet a child like Bessie."

"Bessie is not a very young child, now," he answered. "I think you said she was twelve last week, and you dress her even older than Lucy dresses at twenty-five. I do think, *wife*," he continued, "that we are making too great a distinction between our girls—greater than even their respective ages warrant. Bessie is not too young to yield up some of her baby privileges, and Lucy is not too old to expect some affection from her parents. Lucy is as childlike in her obedience, as affectionate in her disposition, as she was at Bessie's age. We must not make such a difference between them."

Mrs. Arlingham wept and Bessie pouted, and Lucy begged her father privately not to fret about her, for she was quite happy; and so things went on in the usual way, Bessie always being in the ascendant.

Leonard Ashley had been absent ten years, and Lucy Arlingham had reached her twenty-eighth year. She had changed, however, but a very little. There was a darker shadow on her brown hair, which the sunlight did not now turn into gold, as formerly; there was a depth in the clear eyes, that told of a fuller experience which those added years had brought to her; and the lines round the mouth—that unfailing tell-tale!—had deepened a little. But in all other things she was the same sweet, simple, unaffected Lucy of ten years ago, sacrificing herself every day for Bessie's pleasure, and looking for respite and reward only to the hope—now growing dim and troubled—of Leonard Ashley's return. She had heard from him occasionally. He was in South America, prosperous and happy. He wrote her those ambiguous letters which men, who do not wish to commit themselves, *can* write, demanding her love, reminding her of her promise, but never saying in direct terms the words which would have made her so happy—"I am coming home to marry you, Lucy!" They would have made her happier, not because she had any doubt of his love—no such doubt had ever crossed her mind since that memorable evening—but Lucy had often heard expressions that ranked her as an "old maid," and she felt that one who had so monopolized her youth as Leonard had done, was bound to let her show to the world that it was not an *unasked* gift that she had rendered to him.

In those ten years, she had had more than one opportunity to make a happy home for herself, away from the domestic servitude which began to hang heavily upon her as Bessie advanced in years and importance; but she steadily clung to her first attachment, and hoped on, hoped ever!

It came, however, at last—that hoped-for arrival! And Lucy was the first person that Leonard Ashley sought. She was keeping house alone that day, for the rest had gone to a fair, ten miles off, and would not be back until late. How thankful was Lucy for this day's respite! From early morning, when she had arranged Bessie's chamber after her departure, she had given herself up to the delightful consciousness of freedom—freedom to walk unmolested in the garden, to read over Leonard's letters, to think of him, hope for his return, to live over again the "long, long ago," and all this without her mother's sharp voice calling her to do something for Bessie. It was a day to be remembered, even had the event of Leonard's return been struck out of it. But, as if all pleasant things were to be crowded into the limits of a day, Lucy had scarcely seated herself by the vine-covered window, after her early tea, before a horseman galloped up to the gate, and notwithstanding the complexion, bronzed as it was by the sunny climate of the South, she knew at once that it was Leonard.

What passed that evening, assured Lucy that she had not misjudged his sincerity and fidelity. He was her lover now, if never before—claiming her heart with all the impassioned fervor which had strengthened under southern suns, and renewed by the unchanged beauty which he had sometimes feared those long ten years had overshadowed. No! time had passed so lightly over her, that the lover's eye did not even detect those minute changes which were really there—and the light of happiness abundantly atoned for them, even had they been apparent to his loving gaze. There was no reservation now. He offered her his heart and hand, and wished her to name a day, as his stay would necessarily be short. When the arrangement was made known, on the return of the family, Mr. Arlingham showed great joy, his wife exhibited a silent indifference, and Bessie absolutely took it as a matter of injury to herself.

"I thought," she said, "that Lucy would have waited until I was married, and then, perhaps, some old widower would have taken her. I do not remember Mr. Ashley. What is he like, Lucy?"

Lucy's heart was full of the bright, handsome, manly looking lover from whom she had just parted, and she described him in the most glowing terms she could bring herself to use. Bessie glanced towards her sister's plain dress, and smiled; but as she raised her eyes to her face, she could not help noticing the radiant beauty of her eyes and the heightened color of her cheeks, while her father said, earnestly: "Why, Lu, you are really handsome, after all!" After all *what?* Lucy might have questioned, but she was too happy; and after helping Bessie to disrobe, in her ample chamber, with its subtle perfumes and manifold appendages, she retired to her own little room which was now filled with a purple and golden radiance from the wings of the Angel of Love. She slept—and her dreams were all tinged by that beautiful light; she woke—and almost questioned her identity with the happy being who had laid down and dreamed of Leonard Ashley. Bessie was sulky all day, at Lucy's evident happiness. Mr. Arlingham had refused her a dress which she had desired, inconsiderately giving as a reason that Lucy's marriage would require all his spare funds; and he further increased her ire, by giving Lucy a large sum to purchase all that she required.

Two or three days passed, before Bessie would come down from her pedestal of pride enough to meet Leonard Ashley. On the fourth day, she went into the parlor where he sat waiting for Lucy to get ready to go out with him.

Bessie, who was dressed with the most elaborate care, was really very gracious. "Mr. Ashley, I suppose; my sister will soon be ready," was spoken in a most bewitching lisp, and with a grace that bewildered Leonard, accustomed as he was to Lucy's quiet ways. He had not time to answer her, for sweeping past him with a wealth of ringlets mixed up with a profusion of brilliant flowers, and sprinkled all over with the sparkling of eyes and gems, as it seemed to him in that brief glimpse, she left the room before he had time to think whether there were wings growing on her shoulders or not. It was strange that he did not speak of this casual meeting to Lucy.

After this, he was standing at a corner of the street, talking with a friend, when the sound of a horse's hoofs rang on the pavement, seemingly close to his side. He started just in time to receive a bow and a smile from a radiant looking creature, the very counterpart of the angel in Mr. Arlingham's parlor.

"That is Bessie Arlingham," said his friend, laughing at the wondering gaze which Leonard sent after her. "She should be called *Belle* Arlingham, for she dances, sings, or rides away all the hearts within her reach."

"She is very beautiful!" said Leonard, rather in the form of questioning than remark.

"Very; but to my mind, Lucy Arlingham is worth a hundred of her. Why, what ails you, Ashley? Has the fair horsewoman ridden away with your heart too?" said his friend, as Leonard left him suddenly and dashed down the street to Mr. Arlingham's, intending to be there to assist her in dismounting, as he had noticed that she had no companion except a very small boy.

He arrived in time. Lucy stood at the door, looking very lovely in her simple white morning dress; but Leonard saw only Bessie, with her magnificent black plumes shading a cheek bright with triumph, as well as exercise, for she had looked back and seen him leave his friend, and had divined the reason. He lifted her in his arms from the horse, and she looked into his eyes with a glance that thrilled him through every vein. She too saw, what she had not before noticed, that Leonard Ashley was far beyond any man she had ever before seen, in personal advantages. The noble figure and the bronzed countenance were great attractions, and the foreign air completed the charm. She stood leaning against the gate, playing with her gloves and riding-whip, while Ashley made his morning salutations to Lucy. He was absent and confused, and Lucy innocently thought that it was because he had not formally received an introduction to her sister. She therefore gave him one, but it did not seem to dispel the embarrassment, and the interview ended awkwardly enough; and Ashley, after a few words to Lucy, walked away.

Why did Bessie linger so long at the gate, looking after him, when Lucy, his own betrothed, went quietly into the house as soon as he turned from the door? Mr. Arlingham met Bessie in the hall, as she went to change her dress, and she was like one walking in a dream, so absorbed was she in thought.

"Bessie has more heart than I gave her credit for," he said inwardly. "This parting in anticipation from Lu, makes her quite grave and thoughtful." He should have seen her, as she walked up to her glass when she entered her room, and then dashed herself down on the bed, burying her face in the pillows, and scarcely restraining the cry of anguish that rose to her lips.

Bessie was very young in years, to feel so acutely; but remember she was a hot-house plant, grown in the atmosphere of flattery, and she developed accordingly as she had been forced into premature growth of passion and will.

Lucy found her thus; and as Bessie never had any particular diffidence in making her wishes known, her sister had very little difficulty in extracting from her the cause of her tears. She seemed to wave an little sense of another's rights in this, as, when a child, she had clamored for and obtained every object belonging to Lucy, however dear they might be to the latter, either as keepsakes or bought with her own money. She looked to see Lucy melting away into compliance with her absurdity now, as she used to in her childish days. For once, Lucy's thoughtful and grave look baffled the spoiled girl. "I will send father to you, Bessie," she said simply, and began to leave the room. Somehow she took of the door eluded her touch. The chamber was whirling round and round, and Lucy's eyes assumed a strange and wild look that frightened Bessie out of her selfishness for a moment. Before she could make up her mind to approach her, however, Lucy had sunk on the floor.

Mr. Arlingham was in his own room. He heard the fall, and ran in. Lucy was insensible; he took her up, laid her on Bessie's bed, and sent for the doctor. Bessie was now thoroughly frightened, and her father sent her down stairs, while he strove to recover Lucy from her long swoon. It was a great while before she revived; and the doctor was satisfied then, from her appearance, that she had received some great mental shock, and he told Mr. Arlingham so.

As he left the house, he encountered Leonard Ashley, and told him his errand at Mr. Arlingham's. Stung to the quick by his momentary faithlessness to her whose ten years' devotion he had thus rewarded, he walked hastily to the house, and demanded to see Lucy.

"I fear it is better not," said her father, "at least until I apprise her. She is yet quite weak."

He opened the parlor door, and motioned him to go in. Leonard started on entering. There sat Mrs. Arlingham and Bessie, and near them Colonel Bryan and a finished Paris dandy, who was making the agreeable to Mr. Arlingham's daughter. The fellow was handsome and well dressed, and half an hour had made Bessie change her opinion of "that rough South American savage" in favor of the lighter graces of Augustus Bryan. Leonard saw enough in the brief interval between his entrance and Mr. Arlingham's return. He flew to Lucy's bedside with almost a feeling of horror that he had so nearly forgotten his allegiance to that devoted heart. Ten days from that time, they were on their way to South America.

It was not until they had been many weeks at sea, that Leonard demanded, and Lucy related her interview with Bessie on that evening when he found her so ill.

"So the spoiled baby even cried for your lover, Lu, did she? as well as for all the rest of your property. Didn't I get an escape from her? I tell you, honestly, Lucy, her eyes so fascinated me on that day when she fell into my arms from her horse, that I scarcely knew what I said or did. Isn't she well matched with that Frenchified fop, who will give her all the love he can spare from his own sweet self?"

"We will talk no more about it, Leonard. My youth has been sacrificed to Bessie—my life spent in vain endeavors to serve her. Some day she will perhaps be purified by affliction as I have been. Then she may know, and then only, what has been suffered *for* her, and *by* her."

Jester's Picnic.

If theatricals at the "Far West" do not succeed, it will be for no want of attraction. We find in an Iowa paper the following notice of the "opening of the Red Barn:"

"First night of the dancing goat, who goes through the intricacies of the cotillion like a fellow critter. The performance of the goat will be followed by an exhibition of the mathematical attainments of the dog Bruin, a quadruped that reckons up figures like a piece of chalk, and works problems in algebra with the end of his tail behind him. Admission one shilling. No corn taken at the door. P. S.—The free list entirely excluded, except the press and ministers of the Gospel.

No small astonishment was once created in an old-fashioned congregation, by hearing the singers proclaim,

"The Lord will come and he will not—
The Lord will come and he will not—
Keep silence but speak out!"

In another church, they sang a hymn to a tune which comes in as follows: "My poor pil—my poor pil—my poor polluted heart." Another line received the following rendering: "And in the pi—and in the pi—and in the pious he delights;" and still another, "and sing to—And take thy pil—and take thy pil—and take thy pilgrim home."

A lady who caught a magpie stealing her pickled walnuts, threw a basin of hot grease over the poor bird, exclaiming, "O you thief, you've been at the pickled walnuts have you?" Poor Mag was dreadfully burned, his feathers came off, leaving his head entirely bare. He lost all spirit, and spoke not a word for more than a year, when a gentleman called at the house, who, on taking off his hat exhibited a very bald head. The magpie appeared evidently struck with the circumstance. Hopping up on the back of his chair, and looking him hastily over, he suddenly exclaimed in the ear of his astonished visitor: "O, you thief, you've been at the pickled walnuts, have you?"

A sharp nose and thin lips are considered by physiognomists certain signs of a shrewish disposition. As a criminal was on his way to the gallows, proclamation was made that, if any woman would marry him under the gallows, with the rope around his neck, he would receive pardon. "I will," cried a cracked voice from amid the crowd. The culprit desired the eager candidate for matrimony to approach the cart, which she did, and he began to examine her countenance. "None like a knife," said he, "lips like wafers! Drive on, hangman!"

A rascal who was caught with his hand in another man's pocket, the other day, excused himself thus: "Now, gentlemen, this is all a mistake—on my honor it is. I never intended to rob that man, and he knows it. When a man is in a crowd, and has his hands loose, he is just as apt to poke it in somebody else's pocket as his own. I was in precisely such a fix. I happened to slide my hand down in that man's pocket, thinking it was my own—and I almost felt certain it was my pocket, when *I discovered it didn't contain nary red!*"

An Indian had gone to Albany one cold morning, and got very drunk. On his way home he became completely overcome, laid him down, and was frozen to death. His tribe there was very much disposed to imitate the habits of the white men, and accordingly held an inquest over the dead body. After a long pow wow, they finally agreed to this verdict: that the deceased came to his death by mixing too much water with his whiskey, which had frozen in him. This was very good for an Indian jury.

Brown is erudite, a bit of a wag, and an admirer of Mr. Longfellow. Jones, who had got some hint of the matter in the newspapers, mentioned "Hiawatha" to Brown, and inquired whether it was an original poem. "Original?" retorted Brown, vehemently, "sir, it's aboriginal." Jones, who is no scholar (as Brown is), felt sure that his question had been answered in the affirmative, and "let nothing over," and retired in silence.

A Quaker lately popped the question to a fair Quakeress as follows:

"Hum—yea and verily, Penelope, the spirit urgeth and moveth me wonderfully to beseech thee to cleave unto me, flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone."

"Hum—truly, Obadiah, thou hast wisely said, inasmuch as it is written that it is not good for a man to be alone, so and behold I will sojourn with thee."

John Jones has no objection to the lick-her-law when applied to Jane. Jane Jones contends stoutly for the liquor law, as applicable to John. Jane's argument is simple and conclusive. When John does liquor, he does lick her. When John don't liquor, he don't lick her; therefore, if John can't liquor, he won't lick her; the conclusion she wishes to reach.

A wag reading the recent accounts of sea serpents, said that they reminded him of a captain of a ship, who stoutly asserted that a mermaid came on board his vessel one Sunday morning, when off the coast of ——, and politely asked him to remove the anchor which had been dropped against his cabin door, and thereby prevented his wife and family from going to church.

Among the Mongrees thunder is called "the sky gun," the morning, "the day's child," and one who is intoxicated is said to be "taken captive by rum." A native of Africa, who visited England a few years ago, when asked what tea was, said—"Him be water fast asleep," and of the railway locomotive he said—"Him be one thunder mill."

A man was fined £5 at the College police-office, Dublin, for assaulting another; and as he paid the money into court with considerable reluctance, he shot glances at the victim of his indiscretion, and said, "Wait till I get you into Limerick, where bailing's cheap, and I'll take the change out."

A census taker once called upon the mother of a family, in California, and asked how many children she had. The mother replied that she really could not tell, but there was title of which she was certain, "the measles got among the children once, and there wasn't enough of it to go round."

The prospects of Turkey are brightening, according to late accounts. Omar Pasha's army are to "scour the country," and enforce the new laws. If there is a sufficient number of bricks in the army, Turkish society may become highly polished.

A chap down town wishes us to excuse his bad spelling, thus. "I hoap yew will xcuze mi bad spellin xpeshily the little i's because i cant make them any bigger on count of the silk of mi pen bein so short that it cant mak a long mark."

A fashionable countess asking a young nobleman which he thought the prettiest flower, roses or tulips? He replied with great gallantry:

"Your ladyship's two *lips* before all the roses in the world."

Judge Breckenridge, in reprimanding a criminal, was answered by him. "Sir, I am not so great a scoundrel as your honor——takes me to be." "Put your words closer together," replied the Judge.

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